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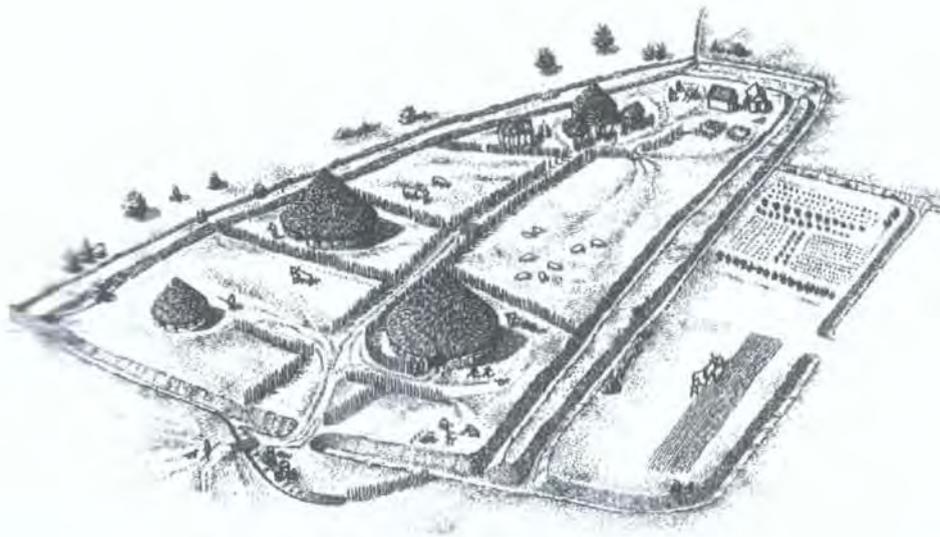
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# Iron Age societies in the Severn-Cotswolds: Developing narratives of social and landscape change

Volume 1



Thomas Hugh Moore

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
Department of Archaeology  
University of Durham

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- 2 JUN 2004

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## Abstract

### **Iron Age societies in the Severn-Cotswolds: developing narratives of social and landscape change**

**Thomas Hugh Moore**

The Severn-Cotswold region occupies a pivotal position in Iron Age studies, lying at the interface between the well-studied regions of Wessex, the Upper Thames Valley and the Welsh Marches. In contrast to them, the Severn-Cotswolds has continued to be neglected despite the rich potential demonstrated by earlier surveys and excavations. This study sets the Iron Age of the Severn-Cotswold region in a national context. Both the older material and the mounting new evidence from rescue excavations are examined and interpreted in the light of recent theoretical advances. Aerial photographs have been used to enhance understanding of unexcavated sites which, alongside a database of excavated sites, provide a morphological framework to assess variation in settlement form and social organisation. The material culture and exchange networks of the later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC are also assessed within a wider social context stressing the need to incorporate production, exchange and deposition when studying Iron Age societies.

This material is used to construct a narrative of social and landscape change identifying the complexity of community reactions to wider cultural developments. It is suggested that a radical transformation in the form and organisation of settlements took place at the beginning of the later Iron Age, reflecting changes in social organisation and a greater emphasis on defining the household. Examination of the settlement and material culture evidence suggests complex social networks developed in the later Iron Age. It is against this background that the emergence of new settlement forms and communities in the late Iron Age needs to be understood.

**For my grandfather, Charles Edward Stuart (1902-1990)**

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**Important Note:**

To aid ease of finding references and additional information some sites referred to in the text are followed by a number thus: [100] referring to site number in the gazetteer in Appendix 1. Cropmark sites are referred to thus: [1/100], referring to number in Appendix 2, 1/00 (Area 1), 2/00 (Area 2). For reasons of space the full database for Area 2 has not been included).

**Technical note:**

Some of the illustrations were constructed using GIS Arch Map using DIGIMAP data.

**Abbreviations used in the text:**

WISMR: Wiltshire SMR

WSMR: Worcestershire SMR

BNESSMR: Bath and North East Somerset SMR

GSMR: Gloucestershire SMR

GWENTSMR: SMR for Monmouthshire and Newport (held by Gwent and Glamorgan Archaeological Trust)

NSSMR: North Somerset SMR

SSMR: Somerset SMR

SGSMR: South Gloucestershire SMR

HSMR: Herefordshire SMR

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Studying Iron Age social change**

The core theme of this study is an examination of the processes of change in Iron Age social organisation and identity on a regional scale using the Severn-Cotswolds as a case study. It aims to provide a coherent narrative of the period in the region based on the wealth of current data available, providing a basic storyboard against which future studies can react. This study focuses not just on the landscape, in which human actions were worked out, but recognises that neither the elements (the material culture, settlements, landscape) nor the processes (production, exchange, deposition and social reproduction) can be divorced from one another but need to be combined to form a coherent picture of community identities, organisation and relationships. These appear to have undergone dramatic developments in the later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC and early decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium AD. This broad research theme is an attempt to move beyond a recent emphasis on ‘deconstruction’ in Iron Age studies and move towards the creation of basic narratives to explain the burgeoning archaeological record of the region. The study discusses in detail the settlement and material culture of the region, and provides a synthesis of a range of new and unpublished data, identifying the diversity and complexity in this material. Through this a narrative emerges of wider, long-term processes of cultural change. The Severn-Cotswolds is used as a case study where larger processes of change and transition were worked out. In particular, it was asked how different areas of the region developed and the extent to which the archaeological evidence suggests different social organisations and what their impact was on the chronologies and processes of landscape and social change.

### **1.2. Current approaches to Iron Age regional settlement and landscape studies**

The Iron Age has long been dominated by regional studies of settlement patterns and landscape use, as it is these ‘domestic’ and habitational features which have long been regarded as the prime characteristic of the period (Hodson 1964; Hill 1989; Cunliffe 1991). It is the features that are so recognisable in this archaeological record - the hillforts, enclosures, linear boundaries, houses and pits - that have been used to construct social models of the



period and an understanding of Iron Age ways of life (e.g. Clarke 1972; Cunliffe 1984a; Hingley 1984a; 1992; Parker-Pearson 1996; Fitzpatrick 1997). In the 1980s this led to generalized models of Iron Age society including the central place model (Cunliffe 1984a). Deconstruction of these models in the 1990s (e.g. Hill 1989; 1995; Morris 1994) led to an emphasis on regional studies concentrating on stressing the regional diversity of the British Iron Age (Gwilt and Haselgrove 1997; Bevan 1999; Jackson 1999a, b; Wigley 2002; Haselgrove and Moore *forthcoming*).

There is an increasing need to move beyond the deconstructing of processual and systems approaches to the period, carried out in the early and mid 1990s, with such deconstructions become increasingly focused on 'straw men'. A generally 'post-processual' approach has become orthodoxy in the period, yet in recent years there are emerging useful critiques of post-processual approaches, highlighting some of the methodological problems in some recent approaches to settlements and landscapes (e.g. Gerritsen 2003; Pope 2003). It is not the purpose of this study to offer a detailed critique of existing approaches to regional or landscape archaeologies, however, below I will briefly highlight some of the discrepancies and problems in some current approaches and argue there is a need to examine landscapes and the processes of social change in different ways, marking a return both to narratives of change and the creation of social models in order to understand the processes of social change, settlement organisation and examine issues such as identity.

### **1.3 Structure and agency**

Recent approaches to Later Prehistory, influenced primarily by social anthropology (e.g. Giddens 1984), have stressed the role of 'agency' as an essential element and prime instigator in the processes of social and landscape change (e.g. Chadwick 1999; Barrett 2000; Giles *forthcoming*). These studies have stressed the individuality and knowledge of 'human actors' able to reproduce and modify the world around them. Central to this argument has been a rejection of individuals as unconscious actors following set social systems, rules or passively being influenced by 'external' forces (Hodder 1991, 74; Johnson 1999, 104).

With this desire to move away from what were regarded as simplistic and over arching social models created in the 1970s and 1980s, such approaches have shied away from detailed interpretations or modelling of Iron Age societies, emphasising instead the period diversity without fully explaining the existence of broad patterns in the archaeological record (e.g. Giles and Parker-Pearson 1999; Chadwick 1999; Barrett *et al* 2000). In large part, this has stemmed from a focus on agency at the expense of structure (Gerritsen 2003, 11). Despite

Giddens' work referring to "agents" who were related intimately to operating in and modifying "structures" (Giddens 1984; Hodder 1991, 74) the existence of 'structures' in later prehistory has become virtually anathema, conjuring up generalist and 'oppressive' rules and systems. The key failing of much of recent post-processualist archaeology has been to underplay the existence of social frameworks or structures within which individuals (agents) act and constitute themselves, leading to an archaeology which is reluctant to explain process of change and supra-regional similarities in the settlement record. However, such 'structures' need not be the monolithic world systems (Kristiansen 1998) but instead comprise aspects such as the household, community and inter-community relationships and far more complex and sophisticated sets of inter-group relations (e.g. Crumley 1974; 2003). In some cases such 'structures', including religions, traditions, exchange networks, may have developed over centuries and in some cases individuals may not have been consciously aware of them as direct agents (Hodder 1991, 11). There is a need therefore to understand such structures and how and why they changed.

A direct consequence of the current focus on 'agency' has been the lack of social modelling of Iron Age society. Despite the recognition of structure in the use of space on settlements and in deposition practices (e.g. Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994; 1996; Hill 1995a), there has been less willingness to reconstruct the ways in which society worked, exchange networks or settlement systems. Partly this has been due to deconstructing earlier models, such as the central place model, with few attempts to replace them. This has also been the result of recognition of the regionality of the British Iron Age with little explicit attempt to understand how societies interacted or were organized even on the local or regional level since Hingley's (1984a) models for the Upper Thames valley. As Hingley suggested, however, one of the best way to understand societies of the Iron Age is through the "analysis of spatial relationship in human settlement" as well as the form, organisation and layout of settlements. There is a need, therefore, to recreate 'models', however broad, of how Iron Age societies interacted and worked on a regional basis. It is only through assessing the material, in the form of settlement evidence and material culture; including exchange networks and deposition practices, that we can gain an understanding of how Iron Age communities operated, understood the world around them and how, when and why changes to those societies took place.

#### **1.4 Processes of change: what happened to 'transitions'?**

In discussing such structures and systems it is important to explain how ideas are transmitted, exchange operates and in what contexts and how and why change in settlement form and landscape occurs. Recent Iron Age studies have tended to regard change as a result of internal

developments (James and Rigby 1997; James 1999) and dispute the concept of transitions almost completely (Needham *forthcoming*; JD Hill *pers comm*). In some studies this has led to an almost homogenous Iron Age where elements of social life have been regarded as almost static and the need for refined discussions of chronology virtually irrelevant (e.g. Oswald 1997; Fitzpatrick 1997) reflecting a wider tendency to concentrate on themes and shy away from chronology (Collis 1997, 299). Inadvertently, such approaches have perhaps reinforced the insular and unchanging British Iron Age that post-processual approaches wished to move away from (Hill 1989). Recent studies, however, show the dynamic and radical shifts that can be discerned in the chronological record of the landscape (e.g. Taylor 1997; Cunliffe 2000; Gerritsen 1998; 2003) and architecture (e.g. Pope 2003) even when only broad chronologies are available.

It is increasingly clear that certain periods marked distinct and potentially radical changes in the many aspects of social life, the organisation of the landscape, settlement location and form, burial rite, exchange systems and so on (see e.g. Hill 1996; Cunliffe 2000; Crumley 2003; Needham *forthcoming*). In some cases these may be marked by change to more than one aspect of society and have resonance over a far wider area than the individual settlement or even region, and can be seen on a inter-regional or wider scale. Current approaches to Iron Age studies are uncomfortable with such periods of dramatic or widespread change as they fit uncomfortably with agents as the prime instigators of change. In contrast, this study explicitly examines the chronological framework and identifies and compares the patterns of change in different areas to determine whether contrasting social systems and settlement patterns may have influenced the nature of society and processes of social change.

### **1.5. A question of scale**

In order to ask such questions and create such models the issue of scale immediately becomes paramount. As discussed above, there has been a recent trend both to focus on the agent and a regionalism in Iron Age studies, focusing on the differences of the British Iron Age. Although such regionalism has been beneficial in providing a detailed understanding of the period and in particular, its diversity and divergence from central southern Britain, such a focus has perhaps lost sight of the relationship between 'local' developments and patterns on an inter-regional and national scale. As well as geographical scale there is the issue of chronological scale; how developments and change takes place over time.

On the issue of geographical scale, in order to accept the importance of individuals and communities (the 'agents') whilst accepting broader patterns and structures in Iron Age

societies this study examines the material on varying levels, relating the scales of social action to each other to build a broad narrative of the processes and nature of change. These are the household and community, the local and regional structure of society, and the influences of wider social patterns and external forces. The different levels of society and their importance in reflecting and creating change has most readily been developed in Annales approaches to archaeology (e.g. Bintliff 1991, 6; 1997; Cunliffe 2000; 2001) and these levels of scale relate to (but do not directly reflect) the Annales levels of history: the *événements*, *conjunctures* and *longue durée* (Braudel 1975). As with the Annales levels, these scales are not just geographical but also represent chronological processes; the *événements* of individuals, within the household or community as daily events or short term rebuilding phases, against longer process of social upheaval, population increase and climate change which may have taken place over centuries.

It is important to recognise, however, that the local scale interacts and reacts to the larger scale of change and these broader processes are re-worked and understood through the individual community (See Chapter 5). This study specifically seeks to determine the extent that changes on individual sites (in form, layout, house size, structure) may reflect wider processes of social change. This has been one of the key difficulties of Annales approaches (Bintliff 1991, 8), in relating the *événements* to the *longue durée*. Recent studies, however, have sought to indicate that processes visible at the local level are the manifestations and reworking of wider processes of social change (e.g. Gerritsen 2003). The data available in the region has therefore been studied at a variety of levels; the household and settlement layout, inter-settlement organisation, wider processes of landscape change and local and regional systems of production and exchange whilst at each stage the relationship of these elements to wider developments is highlighted and how they may reflect, manifest or reject wider process of social change.

Essential in this is the acceptance that landscape use and organisation alongside the form and layout of settlement reflects the nature of social organisation. The theoretical problems and implications of this are discussed in detail in Chapter 5, but in order to undertake such a study it has been accepted that changes in the structure of the landscape and also in settlement form, location or structure are likely to reflect deep seated changes in the nature or structure of the community and potentially society at large. Further more, it is suggested that communities and individuals view, understand and construct their world through a variety of inter-connected media; the landscape, settlement layout, use and exchange of material culture. These are fundamentally inter-related and mark processes of social interactions, activities, meetings and relationships. It is these relationships and connections, which combine to form

social structures. Changes and developments in such relationships, seen perhaps through the changing sources of pottery or settlement form, may reflect or constitute widespread changes in society.

### 1.6. Why the Severn-Cotswolds?

The Severn-Cotswolds is ripe for regional synthesis for a variety of reasons. Prime in these is the relative neglect of the region in Iron Age studies in recent years with no synthetic studies since brief county surveys in the 1980s (Cunliffe 1982; 1984b; Saville 1984a; Darvill 1987; Burrows 1987). These tended to be influenced by social and chronological models developed for Wessex. This trend has continued with the Severn-Cotswolds examined as part of other regions, such as Wessex or the Welsh Marches (Jackson 1999a, b) rather than independently. The region is geographically diverse whilst focused around a significant geographical feature; the Severn Estuary. This makes it ideal to assess varying patterns of identity and social organisation and their relation to varying landscapes and/or social, cultural and economic influences. The region is also unusual in having evidence for later Iron Age regional production and exchange systems in pottery, briquetage and glass beads (Guido 1978; Peacock 1968; 1969; Morris 1985; 1994) to which can now be added quern stones (Chapter 7.4), making it ideal to examine more closely the relationships between production, exchange, settlement patterns and social organisation.

Two natural features dominate the region; the lower stretches of the Severn River and the Cotswolds Hills. The later rise to a height of c. 300m in the north at Cleeve Hill and forms part of the Jurassic limestone ridge extending northwards into Oxfordshire and south to the River Avon at Bath. The region contains a diversity of landscapes; the alluvial meadows of the floodplains of the Thames and Severn Valleys, the well-drained soils of the Cotswolds, rough pasture of the south Welsh hills, and the Somerset, Avon and Gwent Levels, themselves varying (in the Iron Age) from dry islands, fen carr to salt marsh (Coles 1982; Bell *et al* 2000). Other prominent natural features include the Malvern Hills, the Mendip Hills, and the uplands of the Forest of Dean. The River Severn bisects the region with other major rivers cutting through the uplands creating route ways to the Severn Valley from the downlands of Wiltshire (the south Avon), Somerset and Dorset (the Brue and Parrett), from the Midlands (the north Avon), the lowlands of the Thames Valley (the Thames, Churn, Coln, Windrush) and in to uplands of Wales and Herefordshire (the Wye and Usk). As such, the region intentionally crosses a range of natural features including a diverse range of landscape types, geologies, environments and resources for Iron Age societies.

The region crosses both modern (and potentially ancient) political boundaries. It includes ten SMR authorities, the effect of which on data collection are discussed in Chapter 2. Crossing of these boundaries was an intentional decision to examine the impact of modern landscape entities and data collection strategies on our knowledge of the past. In addition, the region represents an interface between the better studied areas of Wessex (e.g. Gingell 1992; Cunliffe 2000), Somerset (Cadbury Environs Project), the Welsh Marches (Jackson 1999b) and Warwickshire (e.g. Hingley 1989; 1996). The region also acts as a geographic interface potentially divided or unified by the River Severn with access to the western seaboard. The existence of significant rivers cutting across this landscape has made the region in prehistoric and historic times a cross roads of riverine route ways facilitating trade, exchange and potentially the transmission of ideas along the north and south Avon, the Thames, Churn, Wye, Usk, Brue as well as the Severn itself (Sherratt 1996; Matthews 1999; Cunliffe 2001). Archaeologically the region is also regarded as an interface of different 'cultural' zones in the Iron Age: the edge of the Saucepan pot continuum of central southern Britain, the South Western decorated zone, the Malvern wares of the Welsh Marches and an apparently a-ceramic south Wales. The existence of such an interface ensures the region was potentially subject to a variety of cultural, social, economic and political influences from inland and along the Atlantic coast (Cunliffe 2001) and such a location may be important in explaining how and why developments occurred and where influences came from.

In the late Iron Age the region has been claimed to be dominated by the Dobunni tribe, although the boundaries (and even existence) of this tribe are contentious (Hawkes 1961; Selwood 1984; Cunliffe 1991; Van Arsdell 1994; Moore and Reece 2001). Consciously, the study area has not used the supposed tribal area as any form of boundary. However, it is one of the aims of this study to interrogate the existence and form of late Iron Age 'tribal' entities and whether such social units can be perceived in earlier periods.

The final, and perhaps most pressing, reason for assessing the region has been the increase in material as the result of Planning Policy Guideline 16 (PPG 16) developer funded excavations both in published form and as grey literature. Along with the recent publication of some earlier major excavations, the new excavations and the material in SMRs, provide an opportunity to create a far more sophisticated and detailed picture of Iron Age settlement and society than previous studies allowed. The few recent studies which have fully engaged with the data being produced by contract archaeology (e.g. Yates 1999) suggest that this material will be important in re-shaping our perceptions of the nature, location and form of settlement and landscape use in Later Prehistory.

## 1.7. Structure of this study

As I have indicated, the region provides a diverse and pertinent arena to examine processes of landscape and social change, questions of Iron Age social identity and the influence of internal and external forces. The following discussion will highlight the variability and complexity of the region's archaeology, piecing together and developing new narratives of social and landscape change. Chapter 2 assesses the archaeological resource, discussing how this may affect our perceptions of the Iron Age in the region. Chapter 3 re-examines the basis of current chronological frameworks, creating a new regional framework, using radiocarbon dates in particular, for settlement features and pottery types in the Severn-Cotswolds. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 analyse the nature of the record on different scales: Chapter 4 assesses the morphological diversity of regional settlement forms primarily through cropmark data, using the evidence to determine differences in social organisation and subsistence patterns. Chapter 5 examines the household and community level, drawing on the form of settlements and houses and the deposition of human remains and questioning whether variation geographically and chronologically reflects differences in social structures. Chapter 6 brings this material together to reconstruct the nature of Iron Age societies in the region and tentatively narrate patterns of change across the region. Chapter 7 assesses the material culture record, placing it alongside the landscape and settlement evidence to shed light on social organisation. Finally, Chapter 8 attempts to provide a hypothetical narrative of Iron Age societies and the reasons for change, drawing together the material from preceding analysis. Chronologically the study spans the Iron Age from c.800BC until the mid-late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD but necessarily discusses elements of the late Bronze Age and early Roman period where relevant, recognizing the dangers in drawing defined chronological period boundaries. The problems with chronological frameworks and their effect on the way we perceive the archaeology of the Iron Age is discussed more fully in Chapter 3.

## Chapter 2

### The Archaeological Resource

#### 2.1. Analysing the archaeological resource

Any landscape or regional study is based on a range of archaeological sources. The nature of this resource directly influences the way in which the period and its societies are perceived. Although many previous syntheses in the region and elsewhere have paid lip service to this, rarely has the nature and variation in form and quality of the archaeological data been sufficiently explored or discussed. This section will discuss and assess the role of previous and current research agendas in shaping the archaeological record. Particularly important is the impact of PPG 16 in increasing the number of excavated Iron Age sites in the region and the nature of those investigations. This analysis seeks to quantify and discuss the variation in quality and extent of archaeological investigation throughout the study area and how such variation may lead/has led to a focus on certain areas at the expense of others.

As Bradley (1996, 38) notes it is difficult for even a period specialist to stay abreast of recent excavations. For this reason, syntheses on regional basis are required and overdue. Previous syntheses of Iron Age material in the Severn-Cotswolds were predominantly undertaken on a county basis and include; Gloucestershire (Cunliffe 1984b; Saville 1984; Darvill 1987), Somerset (Cunliffe 1982) and Avon (Burrows 1987). Other surveys of areas close to the study area also offer some insight in to the region including those particularly in Oxfordshire (Hingley 1984a; Hingley and Miles 1984; Miles 1997; Allen *et al* 1997) and in Warwickshire (Hingley 1989; 1996). All of these works were essentially brief articles, rather than major studies, and generally too early to incorporate the large amount of material that has arisen from PPG 16 related investigations<sup>1</sup>. Little synthetic work has been done on the Iron Age of south Wales or Herefordshire and Worcestershire save for two recent theses on the Welsh Marches which incorporate some of the study area (Jackson 1999b; Wigley 2002).

Work as a result of PPG 16 is continuing apace. As Bradley (1996) states, there is always the danger that "It is too soon to synthesize" with more information constantly emerging which may affect any settlement models, particularly in the current climate of rescue archaeology.

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<sup>1</sup> Miles (1997), Hingley (1996) and Allen *et al* (1997) to some extent being exceptions.

However, there is consistently a need to create narratives of settlement and society in order to establish the meaning of new material in a wider framework and to better focus future research questions. The influence of PPG 16 in setting research agendas has now been realised on a local and national level leading to assessments to try and incorporate future work in to wider research based needs. For the Iron Age this has been done on the national level (Haselgrove *et al* 2001) and in the region with local research agenda seminars; although as with all such studies they reflect relatively arbitrary geographical areas (e.g. agendas for South Wales (Anon 2002) and the West Midlands (Ray *et al* 2001). However, such reviews tend to concentrate on producing an assessment of what already exists but without detailed analysis of its meaning or implications within a wider framework. The purpose of this study is to go beyond synthesis and establish how that material evolved, and what it means for the discussions of the Iron Age.

### **2.1.1: Archaeology in the region and its role in setting research agendas**

#### ***2.1.1.1 Archaeology in the Severn-Cotswolds until 1990***

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the heyday of hillfort excavation. These monuments, which dominate the region (Forde-Johnson 1976; Cunliffe 1991, 314), had long been recognised and studied (e.g. Playne 1876) but only with the advent of large scale excavation did they become a focus of research. The early part of the period from the 1920s to the 1970s saw a preoccupation with excavation of ramparts and entrance ways, including hillfort excavations Leckhampton (Burrows *et al* 1925), Salmonsbury (Dunning 1976), Bury Hill (Davies and Phillips 1926) and Bredon (Hencken 1938). Other major excavations in this period took place at Bagendon (Clifford 1961), Sutton Walls (Kenyon 1953) and Conderton (Thomas 1959; *forthcoming*). The 1960s and 1970s saw the emergence of more processualist approaches to excavation, particularly a move away from a pre-occupation with ramparts, partly influenced by major excavations elsewhere. In the region, this was reflected by larger excavation campaigns at Cadbury Castle (Alcock 1972; Barrett *et al* 2000) and Crickley Hill (Dixon 1973b; 1976; 1994) amongst a spate of hillfort investigations (e.g. Leckhampton (Champion 1976), Bathampton (Wainwright 1967), Budbury (Wainwright 1970)). In the Welsh Marches, continuing pre-occupation with hillforts was fostered by the work of Stan Stanford at Midsummer Hill (1981), Croft Ambrey (1974) and Credenhill (1970). The emphasis on rampart and gateway excavation seen at Leckhampton, Bredon and to some extent Crickley was the result of the dominant approach of dating sites and cultures on rampart morphology a process that retained prominence until very recently (e.g. Cunliffe 1991; Avery 1993).

The concentration on hillforts partly reflected a widespread belief that these represented the main (or only) location of habitation in the period with areas such as the Severn valley regarded as heavily wooded and marshy (Hencken 1938, 3; Britnell 1974, 293) and the Welsh Marches (Stanford 1981). Such a picture only began to be challenged with the advent of widespread aerial photography (e.g. Webster and Hobley 1964) and non-hillfort excavations in the 1970s (e.g. Beckford I and II, Guiting Power). Although a number of non-hillfort sites were excavated before the 1970s, rarely were they well defined or the nature of the activity fully recognised, for example at Broadway (Smith 1946), Stables Quarry (St.George-Gray and Brewer 1904), Barnwood (Clifford 1930; 1933) and Stanway-Hailes (Clifford 1944). In such cases, the nature or existence of unenclosed later prehistoric sites was not recognised or well understood. The other major non-hillfort investigations were of the Lake Villages at Meare (1906-1956) (St.George-Gray and Bulleid 1953; St.George-Gray and Cotton. 1966) and Glastonbury (1892-1906) (Bullied and St.George-Gray 1911; 1917).

A notable element is the number of prominent female archaeologists involved in these early investigations. Elsie Clifford's work at Bagendon and numerous smaller sites, such as Barnwood, Stanway-Hailes and Hucclecote, was influential in framing and interpreting the Iron Age, as was that of Molly Cotton (Cotton 1961; Reece 1984a). Others included Helen O'Neil (1952), Hencken at Bredon Hill and Miss C. Smith's excavations at Broadway (1946). The level of female involvement does not however appear to have affected a focus on invasionist interpretations dominant at the time. A factor here was perhaps the influence of R.E.M. Wheeler who was closely associated with a number of these individuals (Hencken 1938, 2; Reece 1984a).

The work of regional societies also influenced the focus of previous research on Iron Age sites. The Bristol Speleological Society's work in the caves of the Mendips from the 1900s onward (but particularly in the 1920s) has been essential in identifying the use of such caves in the Iron Age and continues to do so (e.g. Colcutt *et al* 1987). The focus on caves, however, led until relatively recently to a somewhat distorted picture of hillfort and cave sites with little recognition of other settlement elements. In addition, the early nature of most of these cave investigations entails that the exact contexts and relationships of finds is hard to disentangle and identify the exact nature of activity.

Iron Age research in the region, particularly that of the late Iron Age, has also been dominated by study of Roman sites. This has influenced both where sites were found and excavated and also how they were interpreted. The focus in the 1950s and 1960s on Roman sites led to Iron Age material being detected by chance; for example at the Roman villas of Frocester (begun

by Capt. Gracie in 1950s (Price 2000) and Hole Ground (Ashworth and Crampton 1964), small towns; e.g. Camerton (Wedlake 1958) and Weston-under-Penyard (Jack 1927; Garrod and Moss 1967) and temple sites such as Nettleton (Wedlake 1981). This is also true of more recent excavations where Iron Age remains have often been a 'by-product' on Roman sites, at Uley-West Hill (Woodward and Leach 1993), Barnsley Park (Webster 1981), Marshfield (Blockley 1985) and Gatcombe (Branigan 1977).

Not only did this kind of accidental observation uncover Iron Age material but in many ways led to a particular understanding of the late Iron Age; one which persists and resonates today. The concurrence of Iron Age evidence with Roman settlement influenced a strain of thought stressing continuity between the late Iron Age and Roman periods. As Hingley (2000) has shown, Haverfield's work in the 1900s had already established the idea of continuity in people and places between the late Iron Age and Roman periods. The occurrence of Iron Age material beneath Roman settlements appears to have confirmed this idea of direct continuity between the late Iron Age 'Dobunni' and Roman activity. Such ideas resonate through interpretations of, for example, the relationship between Bagendon as a pre-Roman tribal capital and precursor to Cirencester (Clifford 1961; Millet 1990) and more recently claims of a pre-Roman 'Oppidum' beneath Gloucester (Hurst 1999). The domination of the Iron Age in the region by Roman studies, therefore, has a long (and continuing) tradition which has, perhaps artificially, created a picture of continuity and stability between the two periods. Whilst recent work may be re-balancing the picture with work on 'virgin' sites, the continuity model as a product of previous research approaches and agendas remains dominant.

The increasing post-war development of the British landscape saw the rise of rescue archaeology in the region. In addition to major projects such as the building of the M5, the 1950s onwards saw a range of observations by DOE and amateur archaeologists, as the database indicates. As Fowler (1977) noted this, and work such as that by Oswald (1974) and Britnell (1974) around Beckford, 'created' the archaeology of lowland Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, an area which had previously been seen as lacking in prehistoric settlement. The M5 work found few definitively Iron Age remains due mainly to a lack of systematic evaluation rather than a real absence. Unfortunately, the majority of investigations in development areas between 1950 and 1980, due to the lack of planning guidelines led to informal observations which have subsequently never been published and whose archives are often extremely limited. Even in the case of major schemes, such as the M5, some important sites, such as Dibbles Farm, Christon (Morris 1988), were poorly recorded and had to wait until the 1980s to be written up in any coherent form.

### 2.1.1.2 The archaeological resource since 1990

Changes in planning guidelines in 1988 and implementation of PPG 16 in 1990, have led to a massive increase in the number of archaeological investigations in the region (Figure 2.1.1.1)<sup>2</sup>. A marked rise in excavations can be seen in the 1990s and in the 2000s<sup>3</sup>. The first three years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have seen investigation of nearly as many sites as the whole of the 1950s or 1960s, testament to the increasing amount of archaeological work post PPG 16. There does, however, appear to be something of a decline in comparison to the 1990s, although this seems likely to relate to the ongoing nature of many projects and lack of interim details rather than decline in investigations.

The policy of English Heritage in providing funds to bring together and publish many earlier excavations has also meant that many sites previously known only through brief reports can be studied in detail. These include the hillforts at Conderon (Thomas *forthcoming*) and Cadbury Castle (Barrett *et al* 2000) as well as smaller but informative excavations such as Sandy Lane, Cheltenham (Leah and Young 2001) and Dibbles Farm, Christon (Morris 1988). This work has also included collations of earlier work and small scale watching brief observations, for example Weston-under-Penyard (Jackson 2000).

PPG 16 has also shifted the focus of work to lowland, non-hillfort sites as a product of the location of development areas. This has produced a range of new site types and sites in new areas, for example the spreading, unenclosed settlements at Shorncote [141], the unenclosed site at Hallen [191], the conjoined enclosures at Cribbs Causeway [166] and lowland landscapes like those at Aston Mill and Preston. However, a continued reliance on cropmarks and geophysical survey to identify 'sites' and determine excavation areas perhaps perpetuates a preoccupation with 'sites', as opposed to landscapes, and continues to miss more ephemeral Iron Age land use, activity and occupation areas. This can be seen at a number of excavations including Preston enclosures and pit alignment (Mudd *et al* 1999). At Shepton Mallett, the adjacent early and middle Iron Age settlements at Fields Farm and Cannard's Grave (Birbeck 2002) have been excavated in isolation with no attempt to investigate the landscape in between. This is not the fault of the projects themselves; they are restricted to the area of development and to limited timescale. However, it might be the case that future research work could develop from such key-hole areas and investigate the areas in between. Where large

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that stray finds have not been included in this or sites where only earthwork surveys have been undertaken. Where relevant, geophysical and fieldwalking surveys have been included and all excavations (however limited).

<sup>3</sup> Although a number of investigation have been included from 2001 and 2002 a number of in progress excavations/evaluations have been excluded. October 2002 was defined as the 'cut off' for new sites.

scale stripping of the landscape has been undertaken, such as Shorncliffe in the upper Thames valley, far more complex landscapes have often been revealed with multi-period activity.

In addition to contract archaeology the role of local societies and individuals should not be underestimated in setting research agendas. This is particularly important in areas such as the Cotswolds where there is less development and thus opportunity for investigation. It is important to note the influence of some of these groups in creating the archaeological record. In the Forest of Dean, the Dean Archaeology Group, for example, has tended to focus on Roman Archaeology, and this is perhaps true of most amateur research in the region. With the Dean Group and others, such as GADARG, this often reflects the research interests of their initial founders such as Graham Webster. In consequence, Iron Age sites, or more specifically, the potential for Iron Age sites below Roman ones are noted only as a by product of the research on Roman settlement,<sup>4</sup> creating a potential bias to late Iron Age-Roman continuity, as opposed to possible changes.

On the Cotswolds, Alistair Marshall has undertaken several geophysical and fieldwalking surveys and some limited excavations that have produced a number of new sites and shed some light on later Iron Age activity in the north Gloucestershire area. However, most of this information is unavailable for further analysis whether in published form or in the SMR making it difficult to assess its full potential and implications. Just as with the variation in development the activities of such individuals needs to be considered in both noting their personal research interests and agendas and also in increasing the representation of 'sites' in certain areas.

### *2.1.2. Defining sites and creating databases*

For quantifying the impact of PPG 16 on Iron Age activity (as opposed to just settlement) each piece of data needs to be defined. Conceptually, therefore, some definition is required as to how a 'site' is defined (if only for the purpose of this quantitative analysis). Discussion in Chapters 4, 5, 6 will focus on the meaning of different types of 'site', for example, to what extent an individual findspot reflects settlement activity and so on. This section focuses on how the data has been collected and what distributions such as Fig. 2.3.3.3 actually represent.

A major problem of site databases and SMRs is their inability to discuss landscapes as opposed to sites. Databases have to define distinct 'sites' as isolated features as opposed to

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<sup>4</sup> This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

being part of wider landscapes. This creates a range of methodological and theoretical problems (discussed in chapter 1, 4/5). As Bruck and Goodman (1999, 5) have noted, such a process ignores the human perceptions of space and creates a western approach to space and defined entities which may mask our interpretation of the landscape.

Next is the question of what each 'site' represents. For example, for this study, 'sites' with just a few sherds of culturally Iron Age pottery have been included, whether found in isolation or present on Roman sites; such as the sherds of 'middle' Iron Age pottery from Barnsley Park (Webster 1982; Saville 1984a) or the apparent late Iron Age material from Dorn (Timby 1998). There are a number of issues with such material: for example, to what extent do these signify genuine Iron Age activity, or relate to later use of the site. More important (discussed further in Chapter 6), to what extent does such material represent continuity and of what kind? For the purpose of analysis in the database a 'site' is represented by all evidence of Iron Age activity, be it an earthwork, excavated settlement, stray metalwork find or stray pottery sherds. In this context, the term 'site' does not carry meanings of the nature of activity or occupation but indicates Iron Age activity in that area. Cropmarks and some potentially prehistoric field systems were not included because of the large number and difficulty in establishing an Iron Age date. More detailed examination of the landscape using these aspects was undertaken for smaller study areas (Chapter 4) where cropmark information was examined alongside other material.

Recent studies have identified the variability in recording of material from the Bronze Age and Iron Ages and how different reports written in the same year can produce different distribution maps (Bradley 1996, 38). This is a product of a number of factors, including the variance in SMR records, differences in the knowledge that units have of their own and local material, and the pace at which material is coming to light, often followed by a serious time lag in publication. Because of this and that syntheses from the 1970s and 1980s (e.g. RCHME 1976; Saville 1984a; Aston and Burrows 1982; Aston and Iles 1987; Darvill 1987) remain the basis for research in the region entails there is a need for a new synthetic assessments of periods from this region in particular. The initial purpose therefore of this database was to create a comprehensive as possible database of all 'Iron Age' finds, excavations and surveys from the study area.

This study attempts to integrate all material as representing some form of Iron Age activity. However, it is too simplistic to regard all Iron Age finds as marking Iron Age settlement evidence, as suggested by Saville (1984). Even stray pot sherds could potentially indicate a range of different types of land use and there is growing evidence that the term 'stray find' is

perhaps a misnomer. Richard Bradley (*forthcoming*) has recently suggested that stray finds are often located in relation to settlements, field systems and burnt mounds. The same may be the case in the study area with collections of coins in particular often related to evidence of other features, be they settlement, temples or other activities rather than as 'isolated' finds (cf. Chapter 6.3). For this study stray finds have been given their own 'site' number except when there is convincing evidence that they relate to an existing 'site' (for example, the stray coins found within the hillfort at Uley Bury).

A second problem is combining information on Iron Age material from a diverse range of SMR authorities, the first 'port of call' for the regions. The study area (Fig. 1.1) includes all or part of 10 SMRs authorities; Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset, Bristol City, Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Monmouthshire/Newport (formerly Gwent, now held by Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (Swansea) and referred to here as 'Wales').

There are a number of problems and limitations in SMR information, including sometimes limited information on small finds (e.g. Gwent and Glamorgan), variation in recording of monuments (particularly with more recent developer funded material not entered on the SMR), variation in categorisation, chronological definition and site type, usually defined by individuals with no standard system either within or between SMRs. The dating frameworks used by many SMRs may also cause potential problems. Many SMR define the Iron Age as between 800 or 700BC and AD43. The chronological parameters of this study are between 800BC and AD100 (primarily to concentrate on the early/middle and later Iron Age/early Roman transitions). There are obvious problems however in missing relevant information which has been defined as Bronze Age but may indicate early Iron Age activity (see Chapter 3) and of late Iron Age material defined in the SMR as early Roman. Rarely, for instance, will the odd sherd of probable Iron Age Malvernian ware in amongst a Roman assemblage be flagged up by the SMR search. Despite these problems each SMR has been visited and discussion with local archaeologists, along with detailed search through interim reports at local units which produced many recent excavations not yet entered on the SMR.

Individual units, local researchers, and the finds liaison officers of the Portable Antiquities Scheme were all contacted to provide information on recent projects and finds which may have included Iron Age material. Some information will inevitably have been missed from the database for this thesis. It does not represent a 'final word', but the knowledge of Iron Age material from the region filtered through the work of local researchers, contract units and SMR databases.

The noting of 'stray finds' is especially prone to piecemeal recording and the variable activity of metal-detectorists and processes such as river dredging. Further biases are introduced through incorrectly ascribing artefacts, either by mistake or to increase their sale-ability. The Portable Antiquities Scheme has added a new element to the information, although at present the study area is not fully integrated in to the pilot scheme, with two finds liaison officers covering the fringes of the study area; Angie Bolton's<sup>5</sup> remit including Hereford and Worcestershire (and some of Gloucestershire) whilst Corstaigh Trevarthern covers Somerset. The amount of information received from these studies is not yet huge but enough to affect interpretation of stray find distribution (see 6.3).

## 2.2. Quantifying the information

Although most excavation reports and syntheses of period include some general observations of the variability of the archaeological record there are few examples of explicit quantification and its effect on the creation of narratives of the past. Without such assessment it is difficult to clarify the dominance of certain regions, particular sites and the role of past and current research agendas in the interpretation of the Iron Age landscape. Only explicit illustration of such variability can gaps in the record be noted and identified as voids in archaeological identification or real patterns in the archaeological record.

Each site has been given a numerical ranking to indicate the quality of information obtainable about the nature, dating etc of each 'site' (See Table 2.1). This enables the quality of evidence for Iron Age settlement to be quantified both by period (i.e. how well we understand late Iron Age sites as opposed to early Iron Age sites) and by region (indicating, for example, areas where the quality of information is especially low). Whilst variations in the level of information have been noted in the past (e.g. A. Saville (1984a) on Gloucestershire), this has only been done on an anecdotal level. A quantified assessment provides a far more detailed and accurate picture enabling the study to note where variation in the evidence may hinder study of Iron Age settlement and landscape or others that have been overly represented.

### 2.2.1 Quality index

Table 2.1: Definition of Quality numbers

Quality number	Description
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<sup>5</sup> Thanks must go to Angie Bolton (FLO for the West Midlands) for her information on finds from the region and on the effect of variability in recording in her region as a result of differences between the SMR and FL system.

1(High)	Excavated to a high standard. Published with specialist reports enabling re-assessment. Key sites enabling discussion of wide aspects of the period.
2	Excavated to modern standards but either without full publication or on a small scale. May include evaluations of a high standard. Are usually interim specialist reports on aspects such as pottery, bone assemblages etc.
3	Evaluations, geophysics of probable Iron Age monuments which are usually unpublished or only in brief interim reports making re-analysis of the material difficult. Dating and material culture evidence usually sketchy.
4	Stray finds, fieldwalking material with no, or little, other information on the nature of the site. Difficult to do more than identify potential of evidence. Earthwork sites with stray finds or other useful dating evidence.
5(Low)	Unexcavated sites known as earthworks or cropmarks with no, or little, other evidence but suggested as Iron Age.

The decision to rank sites is subjective with the ranking of each site open to debate<sup>6</sup>. However, the subjective nature of the index need not necessarily be regarded as a hindrance to this study. It directly reflects the usefulness that I experienced in studying these sites and as such reflects the usability of the evidence in this analysis of Iron Age settlement and society. This quality index, therefore, is not necessarily relevant beyond the bounds of this study. However, it provides a useful guide to variability in knowledge of Iron Age material across the region and highlights why certain areas will invariably dominate any discussion of the study area because of the higher level and quality of the work in such areas.

### **2.2.2. Results**

The overall amount of each quality rank of sites can be seen in Fig. 2.3.3.1. The bulk of data from the period is unsurprisingly in the lower quality of material, representing the multitude of hillforts, earthwork enclosures and field systems lacking in any formal investigation.

A large number of sites are known primarily from 'grey' literature (unpublished interim reports, SMR notes and Units typescript reports) and this is especially true of the PPG 16 related investigations. Despite this, recent work has a high proportion of '1' and '2' quality sites in comparison to investigations prior to the 1990s (Fig. 2.3.3.1). This should not be surprising considering the increased consideration through the planning process on quality of investigation techniques. Despite these advances many more recent excavations remain unpublished. Many excavations from Gloucester City and the Time Team excavations on sites

<sup>6</sup> It also relates to the quality of information on each site as of December 2002.

which would provide crucial information remain inaccessible in any meaningful form. Bringing many of these sites through to publication has to be a priority. Whilst it can clearly be seen that PPG 16 has markedly increased the number of sites detected and, in the main, the investigation of these sites is of a high standard that information quality from many of those sites remains limited. This is not a result of poor excavation or recording; most of these investigations were evaluations, and thus reveal limited evidence of features; a section of gully, a posthole but without further excavation can tell us little of Iron Age activity except its presence.

### ***Regional variation in information quality***

The variation of information quality throughout the study area has been depicted both geographically in Fig.2.3.3.3-2.3.3.8 and also by SMR authority in Fig. 2.3.3.9a/b. Variation in the quality of information available is likely to be influenced by a number of factors, including the nature and extent of modern development. For example, the large scale stripping in the Thames valley may produce more archaeological remains whilst elsewhere development has been deliberately designed to avoid or protect any archaeology; for example, developments in the North Somerset levels which do not penetrate the post-Roman alluvium (V. Russett *pers comm*). It is also influenced by authority decisions including the influence of County Archaeologists and variation in SMR records as well as the publication record of contract units involved. For these reasons it is interesting to note the variation by SMR authority. Last, not but not least, it will be influenced by variation in the archaeological record itself reflecting differences in past use and settlement of the landscape. This is the most difficult question; to assess the relationship between site information quality and the nature of the archaeology.

The overall distribution of 'sites' (Fig. 2.3.3.3) shows that whilst there is widespread coverage, certain areas; the Severn Valley, Welsh mountains and parts of Cotswolds, represent almost black holes even in amongst more well studied areas (cf. Haselgrove *et al* 2001). These areas highlight the danger in making assumptions about the archaeological record. For example, Van Arsdell's (1994) claim that the Severn Valley represents a division between coin using areas because of the lack of coins in the area, may well be a product of the limited archaeological research in the area rather than reflect a pattern of past coin use/deposition. By quality certain patterns emerge. The distribution of quality 1 and 2 sites appears to be biased towards the Cotswolds and upper Thames Valley, reflecting the

increased developer and research archaeology undertaken in that area<sup>7</sup>. In some instance these sites can be seen to follow certain investigations, such as the A417/419 road scheme (Mudd *et al* 1999).

### ***Herefordshire and Wales***

The substantial number of '5' sites in both Herefordshire and south east Wales indicates the large number of earthwork sites (predominantly hillforts or other enclosures) in the area which have had little or no investigation. Despite this, even within the rural areas of Herefordshire, development has produced a number of new sites; in particular the mid-late Iron Age sites at Wellington Quarries [651] and Cradley [653]. At Weston-under-Penyard (Jackson 2000) the reassessment of earlier investigations combined with more recent small scale evaluations has produced a far more coherent picture of Iron Age activity in the area and shown the benefits of such combined studies of small scale investigations. In Wales, developer funded work has produced new sites at Portskewett (Clarke 1999) and Goldcliff (Locock and Walker 1998) alongside the excellent work along the estuary (Bell *et al* 2000) although much of this remains difficult to put in to context, such as the finds from Magor Pill (Allen 1998). In such areas, recent PPG 16 excavations have begun to illustrate the nature of non-hillfort settlement, an area of study that was neglected in previous archaeological research with a pre-occupation with hillforts (Kenyon 1953; Probert 1976; Stanford 1970; 1974; 1981).

### ***Avon (BNES, N. Somerset, S. Glos and Bristol)***

The apparent low level of good quality 'sites' from the Avon area (BNES, N.Somerset, Bristol City and S.Glos) is in contrast to the high density of records listed in the Archaeological Resource Database (Appendix 1a and 1b). There appears to be a disparity between the extent of development in the Bristol environs and the quality of information on Iron Age sites. The reasons for this may be varied. Many of the rescue excavations have not been published in a comprehensive way (e.g. Cribbs Causeway (King 1997)). However, the disparity may also reflect a pattern of Iron Age activity which is hard for evaluations to detect. For example, in the area of Bradley Stoke (Erskine 1990; 1991) and Stoke Gifford to the north west of Bristol, large scale development has identified occasional stray finds and possible Iron Age features but the evidence has been scattered. For this reasons, Erskine (1991) noted the unusual lack of Iron Age activity in the Stoke Gifford area. Such evidence

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<sup>7</sup> Matched by prompt and high quality publication.

may represent ephemeral, unenclosed Iron Age settlement, perhaps similar to that in the Thames valley or noted elsewhere in southern Britain (Woodward *forthcoming*) such as scattered pits and other features which indicate land-use of a different, 'low-level' kind. The apparent lack of Iron Age 'activity', therefore, may be a product of the nature of PPG 16 related archaeological investigations, relying on identifying defined habitation areas as 'sites', as opposed to a real lack of Iron Age land use. Study of Hallen and the area around the Avon levels (Gardiner *et al* 2002) indicates that land use occurred even in such marginal area as the levels and further work is needed to combine the range of stray finds and evaluation material to establish the nature of Iron Age land use in the region (cf Chapter 6).

### *Gloucestershire and Worcestershire*

Both Gloucestershire (8%) and Worcestershire (13%) have well above average percentages of good quality sites and Gloucestershire has the majority of '1' sites in real terms <sup>8</sup>(Fig 2.3.3.9b). This, to some extent, marks both the high level of recent development in those areas (e.g. the A417/419 Bypass sites, Shorncote, Birdlip, Bourton-on-the-water), particularly the increase since the 1970s of development in the Severn valley (e.g. Beckford, Aston Mill, Wyre Piddle, Evesham) and of large scale research excavations (e.g. Crickley Hill, Midsummer Hill, Bagendon, Ditches, Conderton). However, even within these counties there is variation in areas of quality with regions such as the Forest of Dean remaining under studied, a situation unchanged since Saville's observation of this problem in the early 1980s (Saville 1984).

### *Wiltshire*

Although there has been considerable development in certain areas of the county in recent years this has produced few large scale excavations of high quality, Groundwell West (Walker *et al* 2001) being the obvious exception. Investigations elsewhere in Swindon and Chippenham (e.g. Bateman 2000), hint at Iron Age activity but have few details and much of the work in the Thames valley, although producing vast quantities of information, has yet to be written up in an accessible form (e.g. Roundhouse Farm sites, Eysey Manor). Developer funded work, however, has produced the bulk of new sites; including the apparent hillfort at Malmesbury (WISMRST89NW200), unenclosed settlements at Roundhouse Farm (OAU 1991), Cleveland Farm, Rixon Gate (Coe *et al* 1991), Latton (Bateman 1997) and Eysey Manor (Thomas 1999).

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<sup>8</sup> Partly reflecting the large area covered by Gloucestershire.

### 2.3. Conclusions: the effect of PPG 16 on the archaeological resource

Recent years have seen the emergence of syntheses based on integrating PPG 16 material with existing evidence on Iron Age settlement (Yates 1999; 2001; Bradley and Yates *forthcoming*) and efforts in focusing such work through research agenda documents (e.g. Haselgrove *et al* 2001). However, surprisingly little attention is paid to the direct impact of PPG 16 on the archaeological data produced and specifically its variability both in quality and variation in extent and quality on a regional basis even with the research agendas. Clearly though, just as research agendas held by those who excavated the hillforts in the 1950s and 1960s contributed to a biased picture of Iron Age settlement patterns, PPG 16 plays a part in 'creating' the archaeology of the Iron Age in the region.

One role of PPG 16 investigations, even in areas lacking in large scale development, is to challenge long held assumptions about the Iron Age settlement record. For example, in Herefordshire, despite claims of a general lack of Iron Age material culture, every large scale excavation has produced substantial and varied pottery assemblages (e.g. Cradley (White 2001), Wellington (Jackson *et al* 1999; 2000), Weston-under-Penyard (Jackson 2000), as well as the older excavations at Credenhill and Sutton Walls). This suggests that the impression of an a-ceramic Iron Age in the area is due to a lack of excavation rather than an absence of such material. The same also appears likely to be true of south Wales<sup>9</sup>.

Perhaps one of the failings of PPG 16 has been its concentration on urban and road development and gravel extraction with a general neglect for rural areas. Ironically, this may mean that destruction of Iron Age sites is taking place at perhaps a greater rate through agricultural means in areas with less development (Darvill and Fulton 1995). The problem is most acute in Herefordshire where an increase in potato farming is affecting a number of sites (White 2001; Hoverd 2001). Excavation of one such Iron Age enclosure at Cradley shows the potential of the sites which are currently being lost. If such destruction continues to be ignored, the result is likely to be that rural areas, which are already under represented in studies such as this, will see much of the information destroyed through intensive agriculture and erosion. Another criticism of PPG 16 work is the tendency through competitive tendering for different units to work on separate parts of a site and neglect the relationship between them, a factor with the sites around Shepton Mallett (above) and in Gloucester.

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<sup>9</sup> Although the lack of *distinctive* middle Iron Age wares from much of south Wales remains somewhat of a problem.

This admittedly brief study of material has highlighted some key points for assessing the Iron Age in the region. There is clear variation in the quality of information, with better quality biased towards the Cotswolds, Worcestershire and upper Thames. This may tend to focus interpretation on sites in these areas. The apparent lack of good quality information from the Avon is likely to be a result of poor quality investigation and lack of full publication but in some areas may also reflect an ephemeral settlement record. The lack of good quality information in upland and rural areas is significant, including parts of Herefordshire, Wales, the Mendips and the Cotswolds. This appears due to a decline in research investigations with PPG 16 work dominating development areas. Such areas continue to rely on earlier investigations and material. Research agendas should target such areas to prevent destruction (cf. White 2001) and also to provide material to compliment the growing data available in the (predominantly) lowland areas. This study highlights the potential for assessments of quality variation in the archaeological resources providing quick and easy way of identifying areas of past research focus and those that require future attention.

## Chapter 3

### The Chronological Framework

#### 3.1 Introduction: creating chronological frameworks

In order to understand the way in which society developed through the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC the Iron Age chronology of the region requires reviewing. Assessment of current frameworks has revealed that existing chronologies rely on a number of assumptions and are frequently “dependant on a few key sequences and diagnostic artefact types” (Haselgrove *et al* 2001, 1). This review has two purposes; to assess how the sites and period has been dated and, through the use of radiocarbon dates and other means, to establish whether there are chronological patterns in the material. This in turn will identify the way in which these patterns are constructs of the dating methods or real indicators of periods of social or material culture change. This chronological framework acts as the basis for models of social and settlement change. The definition of periods, such as that between the middle and late Iron Age needs to be addressed, particularly the problem of identifying a universally distinct ‘late Iron Age’ material culture horizon.

Apart from a few exceptions (Armit 1991; Cunliffe 1995, 18; Haselgrove 1997; Haselgrove *et al* 2001), recent re-analyses of the Iron Age have tended not to focus explicitly on chronology reflecting a wider trend in post-processual archaeology (Collis 1997). Consequently, studies have often neglected to incorporate chronology as a factor in their interpretations of Iron Age life (e.g. Fitzpatrick 1997; Oswald 1997; Parker-Pearson 1999). Alternatively, on account of the very real difficulties of precise dating, very broad chronological frameworks have been adopted with a rejection of refined chronological frameworks (e.g. Barrett *et al* 2000), whilst elsewhere developments and changes on the site level have been regarded as of prime importance in reflecting social change (e.g. Gosden *forthcoming*; Chadwick 1999).

Such approaches have been successful in acutely recognizing the problems inherent in the over-refining of chronological frameworks of the Iron Age, particularly those based on pottery typologies which regarded form changes as fundamental and related to diffusionism (Hawkes 1959). However, there are a number of problems in the creation of such broad chronological frameworks. Through ignoring the relationships of chronological change in settlements and material culture on a regional or wider scale, there is a danger of creating a

chronologically homogenous 'Iron Age', with developments rarely seen to have repercussions beyond the confines of the small scale community. This has been part of a theoretical approach that has emphasised the agency of individuals and rejected larger 'structures' and processes. Whilst such approaches are valid in examining change on individual sites or within local communities, there is a real danger that such studies will suffer from not placing such changes within the context of larger social, cultural and economic forces.

The recent publication of Cadbury Castle illustrates some of the main chronological problems and issues. The report accepts that periods of hiatus and intense occupation took place on the site, but suggests that their specific dating is irrelevant to wider patterns of site occupation and settlement change in the region (Barrett *et al* 2000, 22). In consequence, the claims of a period of hiatus in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Alcock 1972; Cunliffe 1982) are dismissed as irrelevant. Without establishing whether this hiatus existed, however, it is difficult to establish how this relates to activity on other sites; did they too have periods of hiatus around this time, was there a general shift in occupation sites or a move to new locations? Without at least relatively broad chronologies it is virtually impossible to establish discuss such fundamental questions and models of settlement change, periods of nucleation, dispersal, occupation, abandonment and settlement shift (see Ch. 1; e.g. Collis 1984; Cunliffe 2000).

More recent reviews of the period have highlighted the theoretical and functional importance of present chronological frameworks in shaping our interpretations and views of the Iron Age (e.g. Hill 1995b; Haselgrove 1999). These overviews have suggested the importance of re-evaluating present frameworks as part of wider reassessment changes and developments throughout the Iron Age. To this we might add the need to recreate models of settlement and social change; relating the changes seen on the 'site-scale' with the recognition that broader process of social and cultural change may have been existed (see Ch. 1).

As part of this wider study of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC in the south west midlands, therefore, the nature and influence of our chronological frameworks needs to be explicitly reviewed and re-assessed. Such a review must be constructed on a regional basis, emphasising the possibility of differences within and between regions. It is only by constructing such chronological frameworks that the present limitations in our understanding of the period can be highlighted.

### **3.2 Previous chronological frameworks for the Severn-Cotswolds**

The Iron Age chronology of the region has long been seen to reflect that of the rest of southern Britain. In the 1950s Hawkes' A, B, C was used. Although this system was criticised

in the 1960s (Hodson 1964), the use of the terminology continued in the study area into the 1970s and 1980s (Marshall 1978c; Price 1983). This was made more complicated by the association between style and date thus leading to the confusion of having to explain the continued use of Iron Age 'B' pottery in Roman contexts. Such expressions implicitly implied a backwardness of the region and particular sites by describing the existence of such pottery styles as being conservative. In many ways the current tripartite Iron Age system has only replaced the terminology of A, B, C Iron Age with the early, middle and late Iron Age. This has meant that the occurrence of 'MIA' pottery in later contexts continues to be a chronological and nomenclature problem.

In 1978, Marshall created a new framework for the Cotswolds (Marshall 1978a, c). This essentially reflects Cunliffe's (1974; 1991) style zones but renames them (Saville 1984) and equates them with settlement developments. Marshall's division of the region into three groups affirmed the association between pottery styles and settlement typologies. Marshall created three 'style zones' deemed to have similarities in pottery and settlement. Many of the details of this framework can be criticized, such as the misidentification of pottery types and dubious assumptions of unenclosed phases of settlements (see Ch. 4). It also reflects uncritical application of Cunliffe's model without adequately assessing its relevance to the data available from the region.

Iron Age chronology has also suffered from the region's location close to areas of the country with more detailed chronological frameworks, such as Wessex and the upper Thames Valley. This has led to the application of models from elsewhere, particularly Wessex, being applied to a corpus of poorly or undated sites (e.g. Cunliffe 1984, Darvill 1987) which may not accurately reflect regional and local differences. Such frameworks have tended to rely heavily on similarities in pottery style or the morphology of settlements. To the south a similar process took place but instead used Cadbury Castle, rather than Danebury as a template for settlement development in northern Somerset (Cunliffe 1982).

Such earlier chronologies have had the effect of creating a static framework, with settlements of a certain type or with a certain pottery being placed in a chronological group without really being assessed on their own merits. Thus the framework has a self-fulfilling effect creating a seemingly solid dating framework. Such frameworks emphasise homogeneity throughout a large area of settlement building and pottery use, and also imply that changes tended to be contemporary. Although successfully moving away from the emphasis on diffusionist dating of early accounts, which maintained that one type of rampart must have been copied from another site and therefore be slightly later or the result of a migration phase (e.g. Hencken

1938), such an assumption neglects to assess this on a site by site or even regional basis without assessing the local chronological differences. For example, the assumption that hillforts across the country began in the early Iron Age may neglect site or regional differences and in so doing ignore local causes instead interpreting this as related to wider factors.

Many of these frameworks rely on an underlying emphasis of an evolutionary sequence for settlement and social development. This implied both that settlements, such as hillforts became more complex over time and that society increased in size and complexity over the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC (Darvill 1987; Cunliffe 1990, 1991). Such an assumption meant that the abandonment of sites such as Crickley Hill is interpreted as relating to centralisation of power rather than possible changes in the subsistence nature of settlements. These underlying assumptions have a major effect on how the chronological framework is both devised and interpreted. Other chronological frameworks for the period emphasised the role of pottery as a chronological factor without effectively relating this to social or settlement change (e.g. Saville 1984).

These frameworks also had the effect of creating arbitrary social-geographic divisions across the region, which implicitly became involved in the chronological frameworks. The continued acceptance of upland and lowland zones in Iron Age Britain, first established by Fox (1923) and modified by Cunliffe (1991) as an eastern and western zone, means that the Severn-Cotswolds was divided between the two. This meant that the areas of Wales and the Marches were seen as somehow peripheral, and an area where the tripartite Iron Age could not be so readily applied. In contrast the Cotswolds and Somerset were viewed as being part of the lowland zone, more dynamic and reflecting, if at a somewhat later date, the trends seen in Wessex and the south east. This created a divide despite the obvious links in material culture and settlement form between these areas both in the early and later Iron Age (e.g. Morris 1983; 1994).

Despite a number of more recent studies the emphasis has been on maintaining Cunliffe's framework of hillfort and social development (e.g. Clarke 1993). As a result the chronological frameworks created in the 1970s have remained the basis for the chronology of the region despite the growing amount of data from rescue excavations and large scale site surveys (e.g. Dixon 1994; Mudd *et al* 1999; Parry 1998a, 1999b; Price 2000; Bell *et al* 2000). There has also been a tendency for the later Iron Age to be viewed from a Romanist perspective (Trow 1990, Millett 1990, Clarke 1993). The growing data now becoming available from the region,

enables a wider corpus of material to be compared with earlier excavations as well as enabling comparison with the more refined chronologies of Wessex (Cunliffe 1995; 2000).

### **3.3 Chronological indicators**

The chronology of the Iron Age in the region relies on a number of what we can term 'chronological indicators'. Just as Armit (1991) claimed 5 levels of chronology for his review of Atlantic Scotland, the evidence from the study area can be divided into a number of chronological levels. These include radiocarbon (C14) dates, and material culture typologies, including pottery, imported pottery, brooches, coins and glass beads. Despite the apparent greater material culture wealth for the Iron Age in southern England, the dating of many sites is frequently based on just one or two of these indicators and in many cases on the pottery alone. In addition, structural typology has long been used as a general dating method, with many sites equated in date on tenuous similarities in rampart form.

The various problems in using these 'chronological indicators' is discussed below. A particular problem is that many incorporate circular arguments, involving the assumed date of settlements giving a certain material a relative date, which is then used to subsequently date other sites. This is particularly true of pottery types and also items such as beads. In addition, this can often be based on other dating evidence. For example, Guido (1978) dates many of the bead types on the date of the settlement they came from but in many cases the dating of these settlements is uncertain, therefore making the basis of the bead chronology seem more secure than it really is.

### **3.4 Radiocarbon dates**

As part of a reassessment of the chronological framework the C14 dates form, what Armit (1991) has termed as the "first level of chronology". The C14 dates will be used to establish an outline framework because, despite the problems inherent in radiocarbon dates, much of the remaining dating evidence, such as the pottery sequence, ultimately relies on these and occasional brooch cross dating. Radiocarbon dates represent one of the few independent dating methods for the period, compared to the essentially typological indicators represented by brooches and pottery. Although there are problems in using the radiocarbon dates in the Iron Age due to the calibration plateau in the late Bronze Age and early/middle Iron Age it has recently been suggested that too much has been made of these (Cunliffe 1991, 25; Haselgrove *et al* 2001). A growing number of sites have had sequences of and/or comparative

dates (e.g. at Conderton, Ermin Farm, Preston and Goldcliff) enabling far better refinement of possible and potentially more reliable chronological patterns.

Around 240 individual dates from the study area and sites in the surrounding area were analysed. The majority of these come from sites that have had major C14 dating programmes (e.g. Cadbury Castle, Goldcliff, Conderton Camp, Glastonbury and Meare) and recent rescue excavations (e.g. the A419/417 Bypass sites (Mudd *et al* 1999), Birdlip and Hucclecote). To ensure comparability each date was recalibrated using OxCal. V.3.3 In a number of cases these give marginally different dates to those shown in the reports. Because of the small number of dates within the study area, some determinations from similar settlement types just beyond the boundary were used for comparison, for example, the rectangular enclosures at Barford, Warwickshire and at Barton Court, Oxfordshire. These dates are used to assess broad date ranges for certain settlement types and settlement characteristics. In particular, it was the intention to test the assumptions (Darvill 1987; Cunliffe 1991) that rectangular enclosures and storage pits were a 'middle Iron Age' phenomenon. There are obvious problems with this approach, which are discussed below. Despite such problems, it is felt that is only through re-analysis of the evidence that assumptions over settlement dating can be tested and re-assessed.

There are a number of general problems with using C14 dates to undertake these analyses. One is the large proportion from charcoal and/or bulk samples from the region. The C14 dates from Ashville in particular show the problems of using dates from bulk samples that include charcoal. Despite being associated with middle Iron Age pottery these samples produced very early dates, potentially the result of older charcoal making the deposits seem much earlier than they really are. This can also be seen with the samples from Guiting Power (Old Furlong) (Saville 1979). These were bulk charcoal samples of smaller individual pieces (*ibid*:153). The resulting early dates do not fit at all with the material associated in the pit and suggest the presence of reused Bronze Age wood (2500BC-1900BC at 95.4%prob, using OxCAL3). Therefore, in a number of clearly aberrant cases, such dates have been ignored.

#### ***3.4.1 Dating of the sub-rectangular enclosures (Fig 3.1):***

Rectangular enclosures form a significant part of the Iron Age settlement record from the West Midlands. A number of these sites have been excavated although still a very small proportion of the number recorded from aerial photographs (see Ch. 4). Excavation has shown that this broad group varies in form but that there may be similarities between them. It is difficult to generalise about these sites too much and the large area over which they are found, warns against them necessarily being seen as part of a single settlement phenomenon

or settlement 'type'. However, recent study of the region has regarded many of these sites as being similar in nature and part of a distinct settlement tradition, particularly in the Cotswold area (Hingley 1984a; Parry 1998a). Previous studies have tended to see the appearance of these enclosures as part of a number of settlement changes in the 'middle Iron Age' (Darvill 1987). Other evidence from a number of sites indicates that some may be of Roman date, or at least been occupied into the Roman period (RCHME 1976; Marshall 1996). The purpose of the examination of the C14 dates here is to assess if there is a general trend identifying the date range of the rectangular enclosures, independently of other material evidence and the assumptions of the traditional dating for these sites.

Most of these dates derive from material deposited within the enclosure ditches of these sites, although at one site (Birdlip) dates from pits adjacent to the enclosure have been included. For obvious reasons these should be viewed with some caution as they date only the pits themselves and have no direct association with the enclosure ditch. Again some samples are from charcoal, generating the same problem noted above. This is the case with all the Beckford dates, and as such may suggest that the dates given could be pushed a little later. Beckford indicates other problems in using C14 dates, with some samples (HAR-3953) associated with late Iron Age pottery but gave a date of AD 810-986.

Generally, C14 dates from the enclosures suggests that they emerged around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and a number were occupied in to the late Iron Age and early Roman period. Apart from the, perhaps anomalous, individual dates from Barford and Beckford the dates from lower ditch fills provide a relatively close group in the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC. The lack of dates falling in the calibration plateau may suggest that a more specific dating around the mid/late-4<sup>th</sup> century BC. This appears to coincide well with the dates for middle Iron Age wares in the region (see 3.5.2/3.5.3) and beyond (e.g. Cunliffe 1995) and may indicate a horizon of material culture and settlement form in this period. The sequence of dates from Barford, Preston and Ermin Farm suggests these sites might have been relatively long lived, from the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> century BC, with possible implications for how we see wider settlement patterns. If most show occupation over centuries, as opposed to decades, in the later Iron Age this has implications for wider settlement and landscape organisation and issues over static or shifting settlements (see Ch. 4).

We should of course be wary of seeing all these enclosures as being part of the same phenomenon and there are a number of differences between the sites. However, the similarities between them and the abundance of such enclosures across the West Midlands may mean they are part of a similar phenomenon. It may at least suggest that they are unlikely

to be of early Iron Age date and that similar cropmark sites are mostly of 4<sup>th</sup> century BC or later date. This supports the claim by Darvill (1987:134) that these enclosures appeared at the beginning of what is traditionally called the middle Iron Age and which have been associated with the emergence of the distinctive pottery styles.

### 3.4.2 Dating of storage pits (Fig 3.2):

The C14 evidence indicates that storage pits came into use around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, although the two early dates from Beckford and Conderton, may imply a slightly earlier, 5<sup>th</sup> century date. They probably continued in use up into the early Roman period, possible indicated by a date from a pit at Cannington of 140BC – 60AD<sup>10</sup> and their occurrence at later Iron Age sites near Gloucester (Atkin 1987). Two pits, one from Rough Ground Farm, Lechlade and one from Beckford, have very early dates<sup>11</sup>. The latter is associated with what is described as early-middle Iron Age pottery (Jordan *et al* 1995, 18). Unless such material can be dated far earlier than present evidence would suggest (see below) then this date is spurious. Dating of the pits indicates a broadly similar pattern of use for these features between c. 400 BC and the mid 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Within this they may fit into a date range of c.400 BC to c.150 BC, although this is probably a product of the small range of dates and it perhaps safer to see them as a broadly early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC to late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC phenomenon. Alongside the C14 evidence, the La Tène I brooch from a storage pit at Blaise Castle suggests a similar date in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.

Which of these can be defined as ‘storage pits’ in the classic sense of the word is not always clear. Many, such as those from, Watchfield, Preston, St. Augustine’s and Hucclecote do not conform to the types of storage pits noted elsewhere in southern Britain or the stone-lined storage pits seen in the Cotswolds at The Park (Marshall 1984) and Guiting Power (Saville 1979). The dates included are only those from pits which are certainly storage pits. Whilst this dating of the storage pits matches well with Wessex sites there may well have been differences in the use of storage pits in the study area. It is noticeable how a number of sites, such as The Park (Marshall 1984), The Bowsings and Lower Barn (Marshall 2001) have single large pits which appear to have served as the main ‘silo’ for the settlement. This appears to differ from the ‘typical’ Wessex sites that have a large number of pits. It is difficult to assess if this implies that sites, such as The Park-Guiting, were only occupied for a short time, which appears unlikely on other dating evidence, or whether such pits could be reused (Reynolds 1979).

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<sup>10</sup> At 1 sigma not shown in Fig. 3.2

<sup>11</sup> Not shown in Fig. 3.2.

The use of the storage pits appears to coincide directly with the use of rectangular enclosed sites and may be part of the same phenomenon. There is a problem with this cross dating, in that in the case of Birdlip the dates for storage pits is also that for the enclosure. In addition, whilst such evidence appears to confirm these features as being characteristic of the 'middle Iron Age' we should note that they may not all be part of the same phenomenon and it is difficult to be certain if all 'storage' pits had the same function and some later Iron Age sites, such as Frocester, do not have storage pits. This may suggest that the occurrence of storage pits is also related to certain subsistence patterns in particular areas.

### **3.4.3 The Rectangular buildings at Goldcliff (Fig.3.3)**

The recently uncovered rectangular buildings at Goldcliff, Gwent represent a well dated group. This may shed light on the date of subsistence patterns and use of the levels in addition to the date of the this building tradition. Other rectangular buildings, such as those at Redwick (Bell *et al* 2000) and Crickley Hill (Dixon 1976) appear to be either late Bronze Age or earliest Iron Age in date. The dating of the Goldcliff buildings is crucial therefore in examining the date range for what may be domestic rectangular structures in the region. The Goldcliff dates appear to have a broadly similar range between the early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Some of the dates suggest that not all the buildings were contemporary and that the sites may have moved over time. Two dates vary from the general pattern; building 7, which appears to be rather earlier and building 8, which seems somewhat later. Despite the variance of these two structures they do just fall into the general date range. At 2 sigma these two dates can be seen along with all the other dates to fall into a range between cal. 400 BC and c. 0AD. However, it might indicate that the tradition of rectangular buildings began somewhat earlier than the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and may have continued as late as the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

The Goldcliff buildings are particularly useful in having a set of dendrochronology dates with which to compare and refine the radiocarbon dates (Bell *et al.* 2000, 128). In a number of cases these dates are somewhat different from the dates predicted from the C14 evidence. For example, building 6 produced a dendrochronological date of 273 BC, slightly different from the C14 estimate. The same is the case for building 1, which the C14 dates suggests might be later than the dendrochronology dates. Bell claims that whilst the C14 dates give a broad range for use of the buildings the dendrochronology indicates a tighter date range; between 464 BC – 271 BC. This comparison highlights the problems that may be apparent for the

other sites dated solely on a combination of C14 and pottery evidence. Many sites may actually start or finish much later or earlier than can be assumed from such dating alone.

#### *3.4.4 Dating of the Somerset Lake Villages (Fig. 3.6)*

The large number of radiocarbon dates available from these sites, along with large brooch assemblages and subsequent re-evaluation enables closer examination of their chronology. This may be fundamental in assessing changes in landuse and society in the middle-late Iron Age, especially considering their suggested prominence in production, exchange and manipulation of local identities (Sharples 1991a). Two recent examinations have been undertaken of Glastonbury (Coles and Minnit 1995; Haselgrove 1997) and one of Meare (Haselgrove 1997). To this a re-examination of the available radiocarbon dates can be added (Fig. 3.6). There are obvious problems with these discussions. The contextual records for both sites are limited making interpretation of phasing on the site extremely problematic. However, through the brooch chronology (Haselgrove 1997), radiocarbon dates and to some extent the pottery some suggestion on the dating of these sites can be made.

On the basis of the brooch evidence (which includes La Tène I brooches from both sites: see 3.7), Haselgrove (1997, 60) suggests a start date for MVE in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC with a slightly earlier start date for MVW. Glastonbury has been suggested as emerging somewhat later in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Coles and Minnit 1995), although Haselgrove has pushed this later to the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC on the absence of La Tène I brooches. The limited C14 evidence is inconclusive but might imply a somewhat earlier date (Fig. 3.6).

The end date for these sites is also crucial in broader settlement patterns. At Glastonbury, Coles and Minnit (1995, 176) have also seen as important the absence of 'Durotrigan' wares, which are thought to be no earlier than the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Brown 1997). Previously the site was perceived to have lasted as late as the mid-1<sup>st</sup> C AD (Trotman 1970). The Meare villages also appear to have ended prior to the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, argued both on the absence of Colchester brooches seen on a number of near by late Iron Age sites (Coles and Minnit 1995, 178; Haselgrove 1997) and also on the radiocarbon dates (Fig. 3.6)<sup>12</sup>. The end of the lake villages in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC has been suggested as the result of environmental pressure (Coles and Minnit 1995, 206) but may also be related to wider changes in society. On the basis of broad chronologies there is some indication from the southern area of a shift

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<sup>12</sup> Potentially significant is also the lack of 'Dobunnic' coins on the site and this may be cultural rather than chronological although De Jersey (1994) has suggested one Armorican example can be re-ascribed as Dobunnic.

in settlement patterning around this time (Ch. 6), which may indicate wider social changes and again stresses the importance of the existence of a prolonged hiatus at Cadbury Castle (see above).

### ***3.4.5 Conclusions***

It appears from the limited C14 data, that there are a number of settlement characteristics that appear in the region around the early-mid 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. These include rectangular enclosures, storage pits and possibly in the Gwent levels, the emergence of rectangular buildings. To this we might add, slightly later the Lake Villages. Although this pattern relies on a small number of C14 dates, it provides a framework to compare with further work.

## **3.5 Pottery and chronology**

Current chronological frameworks for the region rely heavily on the ceramic evidence from sites as the main dating tool and pottery assemblages provide the largest resources of dating. It is not the aim of this section to completely overhaul the dating of the pottery present on Iron Age sites, however, it will attempt to see if the use of radiocarbon dates can refine the chronology of the middle and late Iron Age wares and highlight some of the problems in using ceramics as a chronological indicator on sites in the region.

### ***3.5.1 Early Iron Age wares***

Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age wares reflect the better studied material from Wessex. Crickley Hill provides the most well studied early assemblage from the region (Elsdon 1994). The B1 forms at Crickley, finger impressed are paralleled at Ivinghoe Beacon and Barrett (1980) regards this as broadly Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age. The B and C forms are also regarded as similar to Cunliffe's West Harling-Staple Howe group (Elsdon 1994, 220; Cunliffe 1991, 557) dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, whilst there also appear to be parallels in form and decoration including angular bi-partite jars with chevron decoration (Crickley Hill C2) which forms a smaller proportion of the assemblage (Elsdon 1994, 216) similar to Cunliffe's early All Canning Cross type (8<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century BC; 1991, 555). Elsdon's relatively tight date range may be somewhat misleading, however, with some indication that the finger impressed pottery lasted somewhat longer on some sites (See below). The lack of bead rimmed and saucepan pottery at Crickley, however, supports the observation that rarely does such material overlap

Other early assemblages include the C1 finger impressed wares, at Groundwell West (Timby 2001b, 23) and beyond the study area at Ashville where an associated radiocarbon date suggests this material was still in use in the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Parrington 1978) and also at other sites in the Thames valley; Standlake, Watchfield and Whittenham (Elsdon 1994). Similar material can also be found in the south, for example at Pagans Hill (Apsimon *et al* 1958). The simple curved bowls at Crickley are also found at Groundwell West. The notable absentee at Crickley but visible at Groundwell West and other sites deemed 'early-middle Iron Age', are the bead rimmed bowls (Timby 2001b, fig 15:24-25). The dating of these is rather vague and although Timby (2001b, 23) suggests date for Groundwell West as 6<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century (slightly later than that proposed for Crickley) such a date range appears a little too precise and there is an argument to suggest the bead rimmed vessels may be slightly later and some of the finger impressed material somewhat earlier.

In Somerset and Avon the dating of the haematite wares is crucial. In general this is seen as an early Iron Age form (Cunliffe 1982, Morris 1988) but the period when this pottery went out of use and 'middle' Iron Age wares is uncertain. In both areas the length of use of some of the finger impressed wares may have been very broad from the late Bronze Age in to the early Iron Age. The use of radiocarbon dates with early Iron Age wares is more problematic than for the middle-late Iron Age wares discussed below. The problems with the calibration curve making refinement of dating difficult. However, some radiocarbon dates associated with early Iron Age wares may indicate the potential late date that some may have continued to. The radiocarbon date from the pit at Watchfield in the Thames Valley (Scull 1992, 153) gives a date associated with finger impressed pottery of 380-200BC (at 1 sig.; 2 sig.: 530-80 BC) which may imply this material lasted relatively late. The apparent absence of middle Iron Age forms on the site may suggest that it is unlikely to be residual and may indicate that such finger impressed early Iron Age pottery lasted in to the 5<sup>th</sup> or even 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. This date may support Morris' (*forthcoming*) assertion, based on the assemblage from Conderton, that some 'early' Iron Age pottery may have been in use in the 'middle' Iron Age, highlighting the problematic relationship between pottery and phasing the period. Conderton, has produced at least one finger tipped impressed sherd of possibly early Iron Age date, yet the radiocarbon dates for the site suggest occupation probably between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC (Fig.3.4). It would appear from this evidence that finger impressed wares may have been in use as late as the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.

To the south at Brean Down a radiocarbon date associated with the lower silting of the ditch is associated with pottery that is described as similar to material from Kings Weston Down and identified as early Iron Age (Burrows 1974, 147) and another from beneath the stone

rampart is also associated with “early Iron Age pottery”(Burrows 1987, 43). If this is genuine early Iron Age pottery then the date from the ditch appears to be spurious (Fig. 3.5). However, the illustration of the form of pottery (Burrows 1987, fig 4.5(4) appears actually to be more middle Iron Age in form and the date from below the rampart (BIRM-719) may suggest they have an early antecedents in the region in perhaps the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.

The difficulty in tying down the date of some of the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age wares and suggested broad date range, makes the small number of such assemblages even more problematic. Accepting the poorer archaeological visibility of late Bronze Age/early Iron Age sites (see Ch. 6) the paucity of many assemblages is still marked. Some of the locally produced (generally limestone tempered) pottery may be used to fill this vacuum (see below) although associated dates may argue against this (see below). This difficulty in observing the early Iron Age in pottery assemblages has wide implications for how we perceive the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age landscape and the subsequently far more visible mid-late Iron Age.

### *3.5.2 The dating of the ‘middle Iron Age’ wares*

The study area has been regarded in the middle Iron Age as part of Cunliffe’s (1978; 1991) ‘Saucepan pot continuum’, with the only difference between regional assemblages being “minor variations of profile and regional decoration preferences and fabric variations” (1978, 45). This continuum stretches across southern England seeing developments in style as broadly contemporary. Dividing the pottery into groups based on style or fabric is problematic. The dating of these styles rests on a number of tentative associations and assumptions and, whilst indicating that these styles were in use in the conventional ‘middle Iron Age’, do not provide secure end and finish dates to the use of these pottery types. The dating of the regional groups of middle Iron Age pottery is crucial in assessing the chronology of middle and late Iron Age sites. In addition, Morris (1983, 58) has claimed that the Saucepan pot continuum “diverges considerably from the evolutionary sequence of the previous 700 years” and may suggest changes in culture, food ways or exchange. It is fundamental therefore to be sure of the date of this change and to establish to what extent the move to Saucepan pot types was a sudden or gradual change.

### *Southern Pottery*

The south of the study area is dominated by the Glastonbury-Blaise Castle style (3<sup>rd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> century BC) which occurs at sites such as Blaise Castle and Wookey Hole in southern

Gloucestershire and Northern Somerset (Cunliffe 1991, 81). Stylistically, this pottery has a number of similarities with the Glastonbury wares or south western decorated wares (ibid. 84).

The dating of the Blaise Castle styles rests primarily on the association of two bronze brooches with pottery in a single pit at Blaise Castle (Rahtz and Brown 1959). These included a brooch of La Tène Ia type, dateable to the mid 5<sup>th</sup> - early 4<sup>th</sup> century and a La Tène IBa-c type, of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. These suggest a 4<sup>th</sup> century date for the pottery. However, considering the problems with the depositional practices of brooches and their deposition in contexts much later than the manufacture date it is possible that the pit is later date than the 4<sup>th</sup> century. However, it does at least provide a terminus post quem of the early 4<sup>th</sup> century use of the pottery. The brooches are only directly associated with the undecorated forms of this type of pottery and not with the decorated examples from the site, which appear to come from unsealed contexts and may mean that the undecorated forms are slightly earlier than the decorated material.

Traditional dating of the south western decorated wares suggests they continued until the 1st century BC around which point they appear to have been replaced by the wheel thrown Durotrigan wares (Morris 1998; Barrett *et al* 2000). However, the transition may not be so clear cut with evidence from a handful of sites, such as Westonzoyland [157] (Miles and Miles 1969, 25) and Stokeleigh (Haldane 1975, 44) of Glastonbury 2 wares associated with late Iron Age wheel thrown wares. This may indicate that the Glastonbury Group 2 wares continued slightly later after the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and the fact that this group are frequently in plain forms (e.g. Westonzoyland, Hallen and Uley) may mean that only detailed fabric analysis may isolate them in assemblages of late Iron Age handmade wares. The other major pottery group for the later Iron Age in the south of the study area are the bead rimmed wares. As with other 'middle' Iron Age wares from the north these appear to continue in use well in to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and an end date in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC is artificially distinct.

### *Northern wares*

In the north, pottery assemblages are dominated by regional wares and local shell/limestone tempered wares. The Malvern fabrics first identified by Peacock (1968) and subsequently extended by Morris (1983) consist of 5 main fabrics; Malvern A, B1, C, D and E. In the study area those most frequently found are A, B1 and D. These will be dealt with in turn and compared to other middle Iron Age wares in the northern part of the study area. This pottery contains a number of decoration types including stamped and linear tooled decoration which

is found on limestone wares as well as the regional wares. The stamped wares are found at many sites in the region, concentrated in the northern part of the study area but also further afield in the Welsh Marches.

This material is regarded as part of Cunliffe's saucepan pot continuum and refined as the Croft Ambrey-Bredon Hill style zone (4<sup>th</sup>–1<sup>st</sup> century BC) which occurs across the hillforts of the south Welsh Marches and sites in northern Cotswolds (Cunliffe 1991, 81). This includes the Malvern wares identified by Peacock. Marshall (1978c) subsequently renamed this material but did not alter the dating. Morris (1983) has claimed that the use of late Bronze Age and early Iron Age pottery forms ended in the 5th century BC and that middle Iron Age types continued in use until "the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, if not later". Further refinement and examination of the dating of this material (and its constituent parts) is required.

### *Groups A and B1*

Peacock identified fabric A as coming from the Malvern Hills, with Group B1 including Palaeozoic limestone probably deriving from the Malvern (Peacock 1968) or Woolhope Hills (Morris 1983). Morris' (1983) early date for the Malvern wares can perhaps be placed a little later on the evidence from most radiocarbon dates in the region (see 3.5.4). The only early Iron Age site where Malvern wares are attested in the region is Leckhampton although much of the material from the site is in doubt and much is middle Iron Age in form (Champion 1976; Saville 1984).

Chronologically it appears difficult to distinguish between Malvern A and B1. The small number of radiocarbon dates (see Fig. 3.4) can provide some evidence for the date range. A and B1 appear to be generally contemporary supported by their occurrence in the same contexts at a variety of sites, such as Conderton. Radiocarbon dates appear to suggest both wares emerged in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and continued in use into 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, supported by the dates to the north of the study area at Friar Street, Droitwich. The earlier date for Malvern A at Conderton may be regarded as exceptional. The slightly early date at Highgate is more difficult to explain. It is difficult to be sure if this date is certainly associated with Malvern wares but is certainly associated with limestone tempered wares and given the suggested slightly earlier dates for some of the local limestone wares (see below) might explain this date.

The distribution of B1 appears to suggest it was more widespread (Fig. 7.3.1). It also appears to occur more commonly on late Iron Age sites, for example, at Duntisbourne Grove, Middle

Duntisbourne and Bagendon (Timby 1999), where A appears to be absent and is present in circulation as late as the 70s AD at Weston-under-Penyard (Willis 2000). This may purely be a product of its wider circulation (see Ch.7: Fig.7.3.1) and the presence of a Malvern A sherd apparently associated with Tiberio-Claudian imports in an early Roman context at Cirencester (Rigby 1982, 156) suggests it may also date as late. However, the direct association of B1 wares with Gallo-Belgic material, early Severn valley wares and imports at the Duntisbourne sites suggests it was still flourishing in the early-mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD whilst A wares may have begun to be replaced. This contradicts observations of the assemblage from Croft Ambrey where B1 appear to have gone out of use and replaced by groups A, C and D (Jackson 1999, 71). This may stress the high degree of variation between sites and regions in use of the various groups, independent of any chronological trends.

There is always of course the danger of circular argument. Whilst the absence of features with purely Malvern wares (or other middle Iron Age forms) at the above late Iron Age sites suggests dates in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, it is difficult in many cases to be certain whether the presence of such material indicates middle Iron Age activity or the continued use of such material into the late Iron Age. The presence of Malvern A and B1 in such late contexts at Bagendon, Weston-under-Penyard, Cirencester, Ditches and the Duntisbourne sites strongly implies that this pottery continued into the mid-late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. If the presence of such material need not indicate a traditional middle Iron Age date (i.e. prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC) then this has major implications over how we identify late Iron Age sites. Without evidence of the use of Gallo-Belgic imports or early Severn valley wares how might 'late' Iron Age occupation be identified on such sites? Potentially a number of sites with only Malvern A or B1 wares could have been occupied in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

### ***Group D***

This group was first identified by Morris (1981, 1983) as deriving from near Martley in Worcestershire. It does not occur as widely in the region as groups A and B1, and appears to have been focused on sites in the Herefordshire/Worcestershire/Shropshire area, with an exception from Hallen (see Ch. 7; Fig.7.3.2). Morris (1981) has suggested that it may be early in date, however, none of the sites identified with group D appear to have any other early Iron Age forms. The dating sequences of Midsummer Hill, Conderton (suggesting occupation from around the 5<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC) and Hallen, which suggested a date around the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> c BC (Gardiner *et al* 2002), may point to a similar date span to the other Malvern wares. Such dating would appear to concur with its more northerly distribution, where associated radiocarbon dates from The Breiddin (Fig.3.4) indicate a broadly middle-late Iron Age date

range (although one date may indicate a slightly earlier start for Group D, possibly as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> or early 4<sup>th</sup> c BC). The apparent absence of group D on late Iron Age sites and lack of association with early wheel thrown forms or imports, unlike groups B1 and A, may suggest that by the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD it had gone out of use.

### *Limestone wares*

Most local pottery in the northern area was tempered with Jurassic limestone (Peacock 1968) or identified as fossil shell limestone tempered (Timby 1999, 2000b). Within this group, which may be heterogeneous, can be included Peacocks B2. The dating of this material is difficult to tie down. Assumptions over the increasing use of the regional wares in the middle Iron Age has suggested to some that they may be early in the middle Iron Age or be of early Iron Age date (see 3.5.4).

The occurrence of duck stamped and linear tooled decoration on some sherds in limestone fabrics similar to those on the regional fabrics, for example from Churchdown (Peacock 1968) and Dumbleton (Saville 1984) implies that they are contemporary with the Malvern wares and are likely to be local variants or imitations. Elsewhere these wares appear in plain middle Iron Age forms (e.g. at Preston, Ermin Farm (Timby 1999). The association of radiocarbon dates with such limestone wares at Preston, Ermin Farm and St. Augustines Lane (Fig.3.5) suggests they are of middle Iron Age date and indicates that the presence or absence of the Malvern fabrics wares and associated decoration was as much due to exchange patterns as chronological factors.

There is some evidence from elsewhere, however, that the limestone wares have a longer history than the regional wares. A sherd with infilled triangle decoration from Frocester has been compared to early Iron Age wares from Crickley Hill and Leckhampton (Timby 2000b) and this material appears to come from the early Iron Age ditch with a radiocarbon date of 870-420 BC (2 sigma). At Preston, the absence of associated Malvern wares has led to suggestion of an early-middle Iron Age date (Timby 1999) although the radiocarbon dates from the site argue against this. The dating of the limestone tempered wares may have had a marginally longer date range than the regional fabrics, possibly starting slightly earlier (perhaps the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC?). Its presence on a range of late Iron Age sites suggests that it continued into the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (cf. Timby 1999; 2000b).

### *3.5.3 Increasing use of regional wares*

One way of creating a more refined chronology for the middle Iron Age pottery may be by using the apparent decline in the reliance on locally sourced pottery and the growing emphasis on Malvern sourced pottery. Hancock (1999, 105) has claimed that this trend was a general one, which took place gradually over the later Iron Age (see Ch. 6; Fig. 7.3.7) and used this to create a relative dating method for the features at Gilders Paddock, claiming a higher proportion of Malvernian pottery as indicating a relatively later date. Hancock notes that stratigraphically later features contain 46% of Malvernian B1 indicating a later date than those with smaller proportions. Hancock therefore suggest that those sites with a higher proportion of Malvern B1 pottery can be seen as relatively later (1999, 115). At Gilders Paddock, the difference in proportions of local/non-local fabrics appears to coincide with the stratigraphic sequence. It is unclear however, whether this can be done at other sites and it should be noted that the excavation at Gilders Paddock was on a small scale with a relatively uncomplicated stratigraphic sequence. Testing this theory against larger excavated sites, such as Beckford, would be useful.

If this system does work it would be immensely useful in indicating earlier and later sites within the broad span of the middle Iron Age. However, there are a number of problems with such a method. Morris (1994) has suggested that the presence of Malvern ware on sites, although not apparently relating to status, may have been related to availability. It seems likely therefore that those sites closer to the source are likely to have adopted Malvern pottery earlier than those to the south. In addition, individual site choices may have been involved in how quickly and to what extent Malvern pottery was adopted. Therefore, although appearing to have some relative worth at Gilders Paddock, Hancock's system appears reliant on a number of assumptions, which on present evidence cannot be accepted.

#### ***3.5.4 Radiocarbon dates and 'middle' Iron Age wares***

The current dating of the middle Iron Age wares continues to rely heavily on a handful of association with brooches or relative chronologies with little discussion of associated radiocarbon dates. A growing number of radiocarbon dates from the region and just beyond (e.g. Parry 1998; Mudd *et al* 1999) make it beneficial to assess the period in which these types of pottery were in circulation. In order to attempt to assess the dating of these groups the C14 dates associated with what has been termed as 'middle Iron Age pottery' were assessed to see if they shed light on the period in which these wares were in circulation. It should of course be noted here that the occurrence of pottery of these traditions with a C14 date may not necessarily indicate its use at that time and factors such as residuality, re-deposition and the type of C14 date (AMS or bulk sample) should be considered. By taking a large sample

however, it is hoped that erroneous dates will be more obvious and can be explained as relating to other depositional or dating factors.

The material analysed attempts to test the dating of the pottery recovered from sites in or near the study area. In particular, it was questioned whether it is possible to accurately define middle Iron Age wares. The dates shown (Fig. 3.4/3.5) are from features which have been claimed as being associated with “middle” Iron Age pottery. If Cunliffe (1991, 81) is correct to regard the northern wares (and possibly some of the Glastonbury wares) as part of the saucepan continuum then dating of this material in a broad sense may be relevant to the dating of such material across southern Britain (e.g. Cunliffe 1991; 1995). However, there are obvious problems with such an approach in regarding this material as inherently similar and the various different regional groups may have had different dates, has appears possible with the local limestone wares and Malvern wares (see above). Broadly though these dates provide an impression of when the middle Iron Age forms emerged in general in the region and whether certain groups began at slightly different times.

### ***Results (Fig. 3.4/3.5)***

The dating of the Malvern wares has been discussed above. The associated radiocarbon dates appear to confirm the impression that all groups emerged around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, with no obvious indication that Group A or D are any earlier.

For the other middle Iron Age wares in the region the spread of dates appears to indicate the use of such types from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC until the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. The dates from Preston, Ermin and Uley indicate a tighter date for the local pottery tradition in the 4<sup>th</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, corresponding well with the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC date suggested for a penannular brooch in the same deposit at Uley (Fowler 1983, microfiche)<sup>13</sup>. A number of dates for ‘middle Iron Age pottery’ also extended in to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC or later. This could be explained as the residuality of some middle Iron Age sherds in later features. It may also suggest that the division between middle and late Iron Age wares is not as chronologically clear cut as might be expected and that they overlapped in use to an extent in the period of roughly 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC - 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. This is particularly noticeable at a site like Barford where, although showing a degree of sequence between the middle and late pottery, there is a large degree of overlap.

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<sup>13</sup> Although the dating of penannular brooches is notoriously difficult to establish (cf. Haselgrove 1997)

In using these dates there is the danger of circular argument; the pottery in the reports being dated to middle or late Iron Age on the basis of the C14 dates. However, in those cases where the material can be identified in the reports it would seem that the pottery examples do fit into the traditional groups identified by Cunliffe (1991). As a group there are perhaps too few dates here and from a wide variety of sites to make many firm conclusions. It is particularly worrying that a considerable number of dates associated with middle Iron Age pottery are too early or too late, such as some from Ashville and from Mingies Ditch (not shown on the graph). These indicate the danger of using charcoal for dates or in using bulk samples and warn against placing too much reliance on those dates that have seemingly given 'realistic' dates.

The date range for the emergence of middle Iron Age pottery around the mid-late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC coincides well with Cunliffe's sequence for the ceramic phases at Danebury. Cunliffe (1995, 18) argues that the introduction of cp 6 (those wares that may be deemed middle Iron Age) "represents the appearance of new types and fabrics at the beginning of a development that was to become the classic middle Iron Age ceramic tradition of cp7". He sees a period of transition from the early to middle Iron Age pottery from 360-270 BC, later than the often assumed start of the middle Iron Age (c. 400 BC) and much later than the suggested beginning of the Malvern wares in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (Morris 1983). The study area appears to conform to this re-dating of the middle Iron Age. In addition, when combined with other C14 evidence, it appears to coincide with other changes taking place in the around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, such as the appearance of the rectilinear enclosures and storage pits. Obviously there is some possibility of circularity of argument here with the date of middle Iron Age sites often based only on pottery. In addition, this review, as with Danebury cp7 (Cunliffe 1995), indicates that middle Iron Age pottery continued in circulation (use?) into the late Iron Age. We should therefore be cautious in seeing the presence of these pottery types as dating settlements necessarily to between c.350-100 BC.

### ***3.5.5. Pottery and dating the later Iron Age***

Assessment of current dating of sites throughout the study area reveals an apparent shortfall of sites that span the period from the middle Iron Age into the late Iron Age. This is particularly acute in the Cotswolds and Severn valley, where middle Iron Age sites appear to go out of use and new sites appear. At some, the pottery has been used to suggest a hiatus in settlement, as at Birdlip, between middle and late phases. The problems encountered in dating sites of the late Iron Age may derive from problems with the dating and the identification of what are deemed to be specifically late Iron Age ceramics. An understanding of late Iron Age

pottery is particularly important in assessing how early activity at Bagendon and Ditches can be dated.

The dating of the 'native' material is also difficult to ascertain and as Morris (1983, 59) has noted "it is often difficult to determine which assemblages are pre-Roman and which are not". The evidence of Malvern wares from late sites, such as Bagendon, indicates that these wares were still in circulation in the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Indeed, the Malverns continued as production centres into the Roman period.

A particular problem with dating late Iron Age sites is the assumption that late sites would all have been receiving imported wares and have been receiving/producing wheel thrown pottery. In this way, sites such as Uley Bury have been deemed to have ended in the middle Iron Age (i.e. before the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC) on the absence of imported pottery (Saville 1983). However, the number of sites in the study area with Gallo-Belgic wares is low (cf. Fitzpatrick and Timby 2002). This method of dating appears to have been adopted from the south east where the presence of imported material, import copies and wheel thrown pottery is more widespread.

Using imported wares as a chronological indicator also suffers from ignoring the role of choices by groups and settlements in selecting pottery. Willis (1995, 1996) has shown that the presence of Roman imports relates to choice and identity as much as chronology. In addition, he has noted that the choice of Gallo-Belgic and Roman forms represents a move to new ways of eating and consumption. Many settlements or individuals may not have taken up such changes, but we cannot dismiss this as being 'middle Iron Age'. It is particularly important that a number of the sites that adopted these new forms existed in discreet and possibly peripheral areas. They may have been more open to new food-ways and lifestyles (see Ch. 7). Therefore, it cannot be assumed that the adoption of wheel thrown wares or imports is necessarily a sign of high status but denote groups that were willing or able to change their consumption habits. These may have been groups that had previously not been as closely related to the other production centres or social systems that related to them.

It is possible that many of the settlements identified as middle Iron Age may have rejected imported pottery. This is particularly important considering those sites with a predominance of imported pottery appear to be situated in areas discreet from the existing middle Iron Age settlement (Fig. 8.1a). This choice cannot be explained as a product of conservatism or a rejection of imports per se, as evidence of imported pottery from the south west and the Malverns indicates that these sites had been involved in long distance exchange for a

considerable time. It suggests that pottery types selected by communities may have been related to complex influences and choices.

The presence of imported material has also been interpreted in the opposite way, in claiming that some sites cannot be earlier than the Roman conquest. Armit (1991) has shown how the presence of Roman finds in Atlantic Scotland can be used to give a much later start date to sites than they really had. This may be particularly acute when excavating sites occupied in the Roman period. In many cases, features which are probably Iron Age, may be a-ceramic due to the smaller deposition of pottery on Iron Age sites, and are accordingly attributed middle Iron Age or Roman dates. This may be the case at Bagendon, where Swan (1975) on the evidence of very early Roman material has suggested a post-conquest date for the site. However, many of the stratigraphically early features at Bagendon produce very little material and some have no finds at all. It is likely that the earlier levels had much lower deposition of material and could date much earlier. Bagendon is typical of many late Iron Age sites. Often these have been excavated from a Roman perspective and the limited material from any Iron Age levels is often badly recorded or disregarded. With sites lacking in finds, such as at Leaholme (Wacher and McWirr 1982), they are interpreted as middle Iron Age on little or no evidence. Another site that has actually very little early Roman material is Frocester (Price 2000). At Frocester there is virtually no early Roman samian and only a few sherds of terra nigra yet it undoubtedly has middle and late Iron Age occupation. Frocester shows the reliance of a mid-late Iron Age phase on the presence of a few sherds of imports, which at other sites could easily have been missed.

This has been compounded by the belief that the early Roman pottery wares in the region, such as Savernake ware and Severn valley ware, did not begin until after the conquest (Swan 1976). However, there is growing evidence that these wares may be consistent with Dorset pottery and begun earlier, in the early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The recovery of Savernake ware at Middle Duntisbourne (Timby 1999, 331) on a site that was probably abandoned very soon after the conquest may suggest that this pottery may have been consistent with late Iron Age activity. Early Severn Valley wares also appear to be associated with early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD material and possibly emerged from the Malvern industries (see Ch. 7). Elsewhere it has been suggested that many of the local 'Belgic' type wares, including perhaps the early Severn Valley Wares could even be pushed back in to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Haselgrove 1997, Willis 2000, 83). If correct this has major implications for sites such as Weston-under-Penyard and many other 'late' Iron Age sites. The move to such forms might be more in line with that seen in the south with the transfer to 'Durotrigan' wares, regarded as taking place in the mid 1<sup>st</sup>

century BC (Brown 1997; Morris in Faxon 1998) although the possibility exists that there also the transfer may have been later.

There is the converse danger of claiming sites start early on the basis of slim evidence. For example, the silting of the outer ditch at Ditches is dated by samian and Gallo-Belgic wares to mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD but Rigby from the lack of certain Gallo-Belgic wares suggest a slightly earlier pre-conquest date (Trow 1988, 37). This, added to unstratified early finds and the currency bar from the ditch (dated no later than 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Hingley *forthcoming*), have been used to claim a start date in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC (Trow 1988, 37). Such a date remains uncertain and both Bagendon and Ditches indicate the difficulty in dating even those sites with apparently more closely dated Roman material. There is a converse problem that the presence of what have been termed native wares (Walters 1989) and other 'middle' Iron Age forms were in use post-conquest. In some cases, it has been suggested some of these wares may have no pre-Roman date (Spencer 1983). On a number of sites in the region therefore the presence of such wares (which includes Malvern B1) may not indicate pre-Roman activity and certainly at Roman forts like Usk (Spencer 1983) and Kingsholm need not indicate pre-Roman occupation.

### *3.5.6 Pottery as a chronological indicator on the Welsh side of the Severn*

The problems with dating later Iron Age ceramics are equally acute for those sites on the Welsh side of the Severn. This area was placed within Cunliffe's Lydney-Llanmelin style (Cunliffe 1991). Spencer (1983) has reassessed the dating of the pottery from this group and other assemblages termed 'native ware' and identified similar problems to those for the Cotswolds, including the difficulty in establishing which ceramic groups were pre-Roman. Spencer has suggested that a number of the types of pottery seen previously as pre-Roman cannot be dated earlier than the Roman conquest and that alone it does not necessarily indicate a pre-Roman date (Spencer 1983, 405).

Spencer has accepted that one group, with chevron or 'eyebrow' patterning, is pre-Roman (his Class B) and has convincingly separated this group from the broader Lydney-Llanmelin style, which had included quite differently decorated pottery at Salmonsbury. This type of pottery occurs at a number of sites in south Wales although we might suspect that examples may be discovered in the Severn and Cotswolds. Although Spencer accepts that this group is pre-Claudian, it is not clear how early we can push back this pottery. The largest assemblages of this group come from Llanmelin (Nash-Williams 1933) and Sudbrook (Nash-Williams 1939). The recovery of a La Tène I brooch from Sudbrook (see Appendix 2a) may suggest this

pottery was in use prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, although the majority of the evidence from the site in brooches indicates a later date. One sherd of imported Mendip fabric, Group 2 Glastonbury ware at Llanmelin (Peacock 1969) need not necessarily date much earlier than the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, although it could be as early as 3<sup>rd</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (Cunliffe 1991). The stratigraphy from these early-excavated sites makes any assessment of the associations of finds on these difficult and the dating of these wares is still ambiguous. Further study is required to determine if chevron or eyebrow pottery can be dated earlier than the 1<sup>st</sup> century.

This debate is fundamental to the dating of the hillfort sites at Sudbrook, Llanmelin and Lydney and the enclosures at Portskewett, Caldicot, Thornwell and Whitton. If these sites cannot be shown to have been occupied much earlier than the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, this would be at odds with the pattern on the English side of the Severn, where apparently similar hillforts and enclosures were constructed around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The pattern is however not clear and class B pottery does occur at Tywn-y-Gaer (Spencer 1983, 416), a hillfort which began in the 5<sup>th</sup> century (although it may derive from late levels). It is difficult therefore to establish whether the dating of the 'hillforts' at Llanmelin and Sudbrook is correct. If it is, it may indicate an apparent division between Sudbrook and Llanmelin, in some ways similar to sites like Salmonsbury and Ditches, and the earlier hillforts, such as Tywn-y-Gaer. There is also the complication that much of the pre-Roman Iron Age in the region may have been predominantly a-ceramic. This may mean that some sites exhibiting Spencer's class A and C pottery may have had earlier phases than is often assumed. This may be the case at sites such as Portskewett and Thornwell (Hughes 1996) where the evidence of a 'middle' Iron Age hiatus or absence may be more apparent than real.

### *3.5.7 Conclusions on later Iron Age wares*

Whilst useful, the number of radiocarbon dates is too small to construct secure dating frameworks of sites and features. Even on those sites with radiocarbon dates it has been down to the pottery to establish the date of settlement and highlight possible hiatus in occupation, as at Birdlip (Parry 1998) and Frocester (Price 2000). The purpose of this analysis of the ceramic evidence is to examine its role in constructing chronological frameworks and identify areas where the dating of pottery may need re-assessment.

The use of pottery as the sole chronological evidence can be fraught with problems. A number of recent studies have shown the varying relation between pottery to other factors beyond chronology, such as accessibility, demand, status and identity (Millett 1986; Morris 1994; Willis 1995). Past studies of chronology in the region have tended to ignore these factors and

assume that the presence or lack of certain pottery types reflected purely the chronological date of the site. Such assumptions continued in site assessments until very recently (e.g. Cunliffe 1982; Saville 1983) and have been particularly problematic for the period of transition from the middle Iron Age into the later Iron Age and Roman period (discussed in more detail below). It can be argued that such models implicitly continue the once explicit belief (e.g. Hencken 1938; Dunning 1976), that the presence or absence of certain artifact types, such as Roman imports, was related to the extent to which settlements and social groups were advanced or backward. However, recent studies have indicated that the adoption or rejection of certain material culture can be part of a complex relationship between social actors and cultural choices (Hodder 1982; Willis 1996). Such studies need to be kept in mind therefore when assessing the ceramic assemblages of each settlement and when using them to date settlements.

The dating of the middle Iron Age wares is uncertain and without the establishment of a large-scale programme of radiocarbon dating or thermoluminescence programme will remain ambiguous. On the basis of current evidence it seems sensible to accept that many of these groups may date beyond the date ranges currently assumed. The later start date for the emergence of the middle Iron Age wares, suggested by the radiocarbon dates from this study and Cunliffe's dates for the Danebury (1995) may mean that early Iron Age types continued later or that the transition between the two was more drawn out. In addition, the middle Iron Age wares may have continued in use into the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

### **3.6 Brooches**

Haselgrove (1997) has recently discussed the use of brooches in chronology and highlighted some of the discrepancies between sites. There are a number of problems with using brooch chronology not least the limited number of early and middle Iron Age brooches from the region, and southern Britain as a whole, prior to the increase in brooches in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and AD (Hill 1995a; 1997). The absence of any brooches from a range of major middle Iron Age sites, such as Conderton, Evesham and Aston Mill, suggests that such a void does not indicate a lack of early activity. For late Iron Age the use of some types of late brooches, Colchester derivatives and Polden Hill types for example, in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD means they cannot be used to identify pre-conquest phases. On those sites where Roman phases are attested such brooches may in some cases derive from the later occupation. Only those brooches that may indicate earlier occupation have been included although some may derive from later contexts.

### *3.6.1 Halstatt (late Bronze Age/early Iron Age)*

Only seven Halstatt brooches have been noted from the area (Hull and Hawkes 1987). The provenance of most of these appears dubious and none are from excavated contexts. A Type B from Bredon seems very early. Although suggested as relating to the hillfort there is no other early evidence from the site. Both those from Box, Wiltshire and North Wraxall, Wiltshire are claimed to derive from Roman villas which could be explained in terms of curation or false provenance. That from Cirencester also seems highly dubious although can be compared to a number of relatively early brooches from the site (Appendix 2a). More believable perhaps are the three type B from Bath which could be related to the possible ritual deposition taking place in the area in the Iron Age (see 6.3).

### *3.6.2 La Tène A/B (Appendix 2 a)*

La Tène A/B brooches are relatively uncommon in the region. A couple are associated with pottery. At Watchfield (Scull 1992), a La Tène A/B brooch was associated with early Iron Age finger impressed wares and at Blaise La Tène A and B brooches were associated with south western wares. La Tène A brooches may have stayed in circulation for some significant time, especially perhaps considering the relative lack of brooches in middle Iron Age contexts. However, it is notable that large scale excavations of middle Iron Age sites have not produced La Tène brooches (e.g. Conderton and Bredon), possibly implying they had ceased in circulation by the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (although Hattatt (1985) suggests they continued in to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC). The lack of brooches at Bredon is particularly odd considering the large amount of other metalwork from the site (see 5.5) and may be the result of depositional practices.

The range of sites with early brooches (La Tène A/B) appears to be highly varied, including enclosures, the Lake Villages and hill top enclosures. Despite the small numbers of brooches it seems there appears to have been no obvious difference in the status of sites obtaining them.

Dating evidence for sites with early brooches is limited but may provide some suggestions. The La Tène A/B brooch from Winson appears to indicate a relatively early date (possible 4<sup>th</sup> c BC) for this enclosure, which may challenge the pattern raised in section 3.4, although the form of the 'enclosure' is not entirely clear and is described as 'hillfort like' (Cox 1985). In addition, the La Tène A/B brooch from Portskewett may support the suggestion that a number of these enclosures, regarded as only having late Iron Age through Roman occupation, had earlier antecedents. Considering the vague dating for the Iron Age pottery from the region

may be one of the limited ways of identifying that at least some of these had earlier occupation.

Elsewhere the brooch assemblages may give some indication of the relative dating of sites. For example, the brooch assemblage, from the Beckford sites may suggest that Beckford I (Oswald 1974) [210] flourished later than the Beckford II [209]. The La Tène A/B and C brooches and apparent absence of any 1<sup>st</sup> century AD types from the latter site in contrast to the presence of only Nauheim derivatives and Colchester brooches from Beckford I [210]. This doesn't necessarily mean Beckford II [209] was no longer occupied but that the flourish of the sites was some what discreet and may indicate even some transition between the sites.

### *3.6.3 Late La Tène/1<sup>st</sup> century AD brooch assemblages (Appendix 2b)*

Of those sites with La Tène C brooches, again the early date for Beckford II [209] in possible contrast to Beckford [210], appears to be reinforced. The evidence of two from Weston-under-Penyard may suggest significant activity in the area in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC or even earlier (Mackreth 2000, 94), although in what form it is difficult to establish. The stray finds from Cirencester, as with the Halstatt example, must surely be badly provenanced although the prospect of larger Iron Age activity beneath the Roman town than that seen at Leaholme is always possible.

For later brooch assemblages the picture becomes more complex. On the basis of the large number of La Tène D brooches from Salmonsbury, Haselgrove (1997, 61) has argued for an earlier dating than that proposed by Dunning (1976), suggesting the site was occupied earlier, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. In addition to Haselgrove's observations, the relatively small number of late brooches also appears anomalous considering the size of area excavated, which compares well with that at Bagendon which has a far larger assemblage of late Iron Age/early Roman brooches (including Colchester and Nauheim derivatives, apparently absent from Salmonsbury). This may imply that occupation at Salmonsbury was more limited by the mid/late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD in contrast to Bagendon where occupation appears to have been focused in the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD with little convincing evidence of 1<sup>st</sup> century BC activity. If such dating is correct it may stress slightly different roles for these so-called 'oppida'.

Elsewhere variations in the brooch assemblage may also indicate levels of occupation. At Cadbury (Barrett *et al* 2000, 199), a lack of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD brooch forms in such a large assemblage may support the suggestion of a hiatus during the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. As discussed earlier the possibility of such a hiatus in occupation (and re-

occupation) is important in interpreting settlement pattern changes in the area. However, there is still some question as to what a typical brooch assemblage, in form or chronology, from the region and Cadbury has been suggested as somewhat different to assemblages elsewhere in southern Britain (Haselgrove 1997, 65).

Identifying pre-conquest activity at a number of Roman sites is extremely problematic. Kingscote has been argued to be early, but has produced little evidence of Iron Age activity despite the large number of Iron Age coins (6.3) and glass beads from the site (see below). The brooch assemblage, however, also implies that whilst most activity on the site was probably early post-conquest and apparently contemporary with Bagendon, there may also have been pre-conquest activity. This has important implications for the nature of the site in the early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and location of the later Roman villa. The Kingscote assemblage appears to have more late La Tène brooches than Bagendon and is more akin to Salmonsbury. The brooches add to a growing sense from the cropmarks and other stray finds that there may have been an important early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD Iron Age site in the vicinity. The brooch evidence may support the impression that occupation at Bagendon was relatively late, even mostly post-conquest (Swan 1975) and certainly later than Salmonsbury.

At Henley Wood temple, similar evidence for pre-Roman activity may be indicated by the brooches. Five Iron brooches appear to be late La Tène types dated probably to the early-mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Watts and Leach 1996, 79). At Uley West Hill temple the Nauheim derivatives, Hod Hill and Colchesters from the late Iron Age and early Roman contexts allied with the pottery of ESVW etc pottery probably indicate activity in the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The other early Roman military and temple site at Nettleton also provides a range of Hod Hill and Colchester derivatives of mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD date, in addition to five iron brooches of probably late La Tène date and further support the indication of early-mid 1<sup>st</sup> century activity on the site immediately followed by Roman activity.

Brooches found as stray finds or through fieldwalking are problematic but may be used to identify a number of other late Iron Age/early Roman sites particularly when allied with other pottery and cropmark evidence. At South Littleton [450], for example, a range of Polden Hill, Aussica, Langton down brooches indicate a mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD date and alongside mid-late Iron Age pottery (WSMR07334) and nearby currency hoard (Cox 1979) indicate a potentially important late Iron Age site. At Bushley [91] an assemblage of Polden Hill, Dolphin and Aussica brooches along with stray sherds of Malvern B1 pottery (Moore-Scott 1997) may indicate mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD activity. At Birdlip Quarry [146] the La Tène D brooch, along

with other finds such as the May Hill saddle quern (see Ch. 7) may indicate pre-conquest activity on the site or near by.

### 3.7 Coins and currency bars

There are a number of problems in using coins as a chronological indicator. The rarity of late Iron Age coins in stratified contexts is acute; most occur as stray finds or in Roman contexts (6.3). The problems with the depositional processes involved in coinage and their roles in ritual and post-conquest deposition are discussed elsewhere (6.3; Haselgrove 1993). It has been established that their use in dating certainly cannot be regarded as accurate.

However, the occurrence of Iron Age coins in Roman contexts should perhaps not be used to completely undermine their use as a very general dating tool. Despite their frequent occurrence on Roman sites, large numbers do occur on some late Iron Age sites and a high proportion of those Roman sites with Iron Age coins exhibit late Iron Age phases or are particularly early in date. In addition, coin finds from Bagendon, Frocester and Ditches for example, indicate that Iron Age coins were used on later Iron Age sites. There is evidence that coins may have been used in late Iron Age exchange systems (6.3; 7.8; Matthews 1999) and this may also be reflected with the association between late Iron Age coinage and river systems. Although, it has been suggested that this may be related to ritual deposition in watery contexts, the importance of these river valleys in regional and inter-regional trade cannot be ignored (see Ch. 7; cf. Sherratt 1996; Matthews 1999). In some cases, therefore, it may be possible to use stray coin finds to give some indication of the possible date of some cropmark sites (6.3).

Elsewhere the presence of late Iron Age coins is more difficult for inferring pre-conquest activity. Coins from Kingscote and Cirencester for example, may relate to Roman occupation rather than late Iron Age predecessors<sup>14</sup>. As a tool for refining the dating late Iron Age sites coins are also problematic. The sequence of dating for the different types is still questionable (cf. Creighton 2000) and their recovery in sealed contexts extremely rare in the region (6.3). The apparently early coin from Uley for example (De Jersey 1994) could suggest the site was in use in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, but the stray nature of the find and the vicinity of the late Iron Age and Roman temple near by at West Hill, perhaps warns against it being used as such.

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<sup>14</sup> Although the presence of pre-Roman brooches and glass beads at these sites could also imply pre-conquest activity.

The role of currency bars as a dating tool should also be reconsidered. These occur at a number of sites in the study area (Fig. 6.3.2.1). In the case of Ditches it has been used to claim a relatively early date for the site, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Trow 1988) despite limited material of pre-1<sup>st</sup> century AD date. Current dating of currency bars suggests they were in use from c.250BC until around the introduction of coinage in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Allen 1967; Hingley 1990; forthcoming), although in a number of cases though a slightly later date is likely. The Meon hill hoard coincides with relatively late looking pottery and therefore the site could be later than the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Marshall 1978b). At the Ditches other evidence for a pre-1<sup>st</sup> century BC date is limited, whilst at Kingsdown their possible association in a ditch with a Dobunnic coin and tweezers could be late and those at Camerton appear to be associated with predominantly 1<sup>st</sup> century AD material (Jackson 1990, 18, 81). Further dating of currency bars is clearly required and the assumption that they ended in use by the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC tested. Such dating is crucial for sites like Ditches in determining if the site was occupied in or prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.

### **3.8 Glass beads**

There has been little general study of the use of glass beads as dating evidence since Guido's (1978) corpus and no study has been undertaken of the role of glass beads in the region. The dating of glass beads and bangles is still somewhat uncertain (Fitzpatrick 1985, Price 1988), making their use as chronological indicators difficult. However, the presence in the study area of two of the apparent manufacturing centres of glass beads at Meare and Glastonbury makes their use as a dating aid more significant. In addition, the date of these sites itself is consequently highly important in dating the glass beads types. Guido distinguishes two general groups of glass beads; those manufactured in Britain and those imported from the Continent. It is difficult to be sure how accurate such divisions can be and some of those that are deemed to have been manufactured in Britain may have been imports and vice versa. As with other artefacts such as pottery, the availability of glass beads was probably related to a multitude of factors including cultural preference, status and site location. The classes of beads devised by Guido rely heavily on stylistic similarities between examples. In many cases the similarities within classes and differences appears highly subjective (e.g. Class 9; Guido 1978, 76). Therefore, the reliability of these as distinct groups and the subsequent dates placed on them is questionable. Beads in particular appear to have remained popular throughout the Iron Age, Roman and medieval period and a number may actually be from different periods. This may be a particularly acute problem on sites with multi-period occupation including some hillforts and Romano-British sites in the region.

Guido outlines a number of bead types that were manufactured in Britain. A number of classes, including Class 8 and Class 9, appear to have derived from Meare. The Class 8 beads are identified by Guido as being manufactured from c.250BC and possibly continuing in use until c. AD50. The earlier date for Meare however (see above) may suggest that if examples of this type occur in early levels they may have had an earlier start date, perhaps in the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Examples of class 8 beads in the region come from Conderton and Clevedon, both possibly dating to the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. The association with stamped ware of examples at Conderton, for example, also suggests later middle Iron Age date for these beads. The Clevedon example is interesting in being associated with a cist grave (St. George-Gray 1942). The burial was not well recorded but there is no reason to doubt that it originated from the cist burial. Cist burials of middle Iron Age date are relatively well known from the south west in Cornwall (Whimster 1981) but are rarer in the rest of Britain. The date of this bead may indicate that examples did occur further inland.

In contrast to class 8 beads, class 9 examples derive from generally later sites in the region, including Bagendon, Kingscote and Cirencester. These apparently early Roman contexts suggest that these beads were being used in the mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. If this is correct, then when in use the manufacturing sites of these beads, at Meare and Glastonbury, had ceased to exist for perhaps as much as a century (Fig.3.6). There are a number of possible explanations for the occurrence of these beads in these late contexts. Firstly, they may be explained as residual, perhaps as heirlooms, and deposited in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Whilst this is no doubt possible, Guido indicates (1978) that in a number of cases beads are found in necklaces with much earlier beads, it is therefore perhaps strange that none of the class 8 beads occur in such late contexts. If the class 9 examples can be explained as heirlooms then why were class 8 beads not retained? Alternatively, it could be suggested that they did not originate at Meare or Glastonbury and a later site was producing these beads. This appears highly unlikely, as both sites have produced examples of the beads and any suggestion that either Meare or Glastonbury continued in existence later would contradict the C14 and brooch evidence. The most likely explanation of the occurrence of these beads is that they indicate that there was activity on these sites perhaps earlier than the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, possibly in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. At Bagendon and Cirencester this is possible. The Cirencester example is unstratified (Guido 1978, 183) and could be equated with other late Iron Age finds from the town, such as the Dobunnic coins. These may derive from the ambiguous settlement beneath the early Roman fort at Leaholme (Wacher and McWirr 1982). There is also evidence of potential Iron Age activity in the form of cropmarks from the vicinity of Kingscote which need not be directly associated with the Roman site and these beads may derive from such areas.

Class 10 beads have been dated by Guido (1978, 79) from the earliest context of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC and latest in Scotland of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Again, it seems suspicious that the apparently later contexts for many of these beads tend to be in Scotland and it may be that a number of these sites are actually as early as the southern England sites. Class 11 beads Guido dates from c. 250 BC to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Most of the examples of these types in the region derive only from Meare, the same being true of class 12. On Guido corpus therefore, for dating in the region the most useful types of beads appear to be class 8 and class 9.

There are a number of problems with using glass beads as chronological indicators. Guido's dating of the classes identified may be adjusted. The apparent assumption that the beads originating at Culbin sands in Scotland are necessarily later is perhaps more the product of diffusionist principles rather than reflecting a real dating trend (cf. Armit 1991, 200). The other major problem is the possibility that they continued in use long after their manufacture. However, such a problem undoubtedly exists for brooches (and coins), which have been shown to occur in later contexts, yet this has not deterred archaeologist from using them as chronological indicators. Haselgrove (1997), in particular, has shown that when brooch assemblages are assessed as a whole they can be used to refine the dating scheme of individual sites. Further study is needed to determine whether glass beads can be used in a similar way. A detailed review of publications nation-wide is needed to re-assess Guido's dating of these beads and update the corpus. Such a review should examine whether class 8 beads and class 9 beads can be seen as early and late respectively and perhaps be used in future as rough dating for sites in the region when used in conjunction with other dateable material culture.

### **3.9 Conclusions: a chronological framework for the region**

This detailed discussion of Iron Age chronology in the region is essential in establishing the framework upon which models of settlement and social change can be made. A number of problems and patterns emerge which aid our understanding of the social and settlement development and a number of conclusions can be drawn.

The nature and dating for the transition from the early to middle Iron Age can be highlighted. Although the concept of transitions is currently unfashionable examination of the dating evidence for those elements considered as 'middle' Iron Age, including the Malvern and limestone/shell tempered pottery and structural features such as enclosed settlements and storage pits appears to indicate a roughly contemporary horizon for these elements. Detailed examination of the middle Iron Age pottery suggests a start date around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.

What limited evidence there is implies that other aspects of the settlement and material culture also developed from this period onwards. In to this we might tentatively include the rectangular and other forms of enclosed settlement, storage pits, the emergence of the Lake Villages. To this we might also add the emergence of new hilltop enclosed sites, such as those at Conderton and Uley around the 5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC with the apparent decline of sites such as Crickley.

This is not to suggest all these features or sites developed simultaneously as a single 'event horizon' but that from the 4<sup>th</sup> century onwards these aspects of settlement and society developed. If the data reflects a real phenomenon we may be able to see them as part of changes in society, and possibly the agricultural subsistence basis, around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The apparent evidence that these features continue at least up into the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC / early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD alongside other settlement and pottery evidence, suggests there may not be a defined horizon between the middle and late Iron Age as has often been suggested. Against this data the artefact evidence needs to be compared. It is most important not to create circular arguments over dating, for instance dating the pottery from these sites to between the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC – 1<sup>st</sup> century AD on the basis of the outline revealed above. The limited evidence assessed implies a number of changes took place at the beginning of the middle Iron Age, c. 300/350BC, reflecting Cunliffe's (1995) refinement of the phases at Danebury, and Hill's belief in a later Iron Age beginning around this period (2002; *pers comm.*).

It is this environment that the social and settlement models that have been developed in the past (e.g. Hingley 1984a; Cunliffe 1984) can be applied and which new models can be developed. Without at least such broad chronological divisions such models are left providing what can often *appear* to be a relatively static pre-Roman Iron Age (e.g. Hingley 1984a; but see Hingley 1999, 245). Whilst not neglecting the role of individual communities as agents, creating and modifying these developments, we may need to accept and assess a wider (perhaps even inter-regional) processes of social change taking place. The implications and form of which are discussed in Chapter 4 and 6.

The second major pattern to emerge from the chronological frameworks is the nature of the transition and indeed existence of a distinct and specific 'late' Iron Age. In contrast to the distinctiveness between an earlier and middle Iron Age, the evidence suggests that the definition of a distinct 'late' Iron Age in much, if not most, of the region is problematic. Many of the features that have been identified above as somehow 'middle' Iron Age in character, the pottery, enclosures and so forth, appear to have continued well in to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and in some cases could be post-conquest. The recognition that the 'late' Iron Age,

represented as it is by imported pottery and metalwork, is seemingly absent from much of western Britain and the Welsh Marches is not new (*Gwilt forthcoming*). However, this assessment suggests rather than regard this absence as reflecting a somehow backward culture it highlights the choices of individual communities and regions in the use, production and exchange of such items with some areas less willing or able to receive such items.

The continuity of middle Iron Age pottery (and ways of life?) in to the late Iron Age has long been noted elsewhere across southern Britain beyond the south east (Hodson 1964). As such it has been suggested that the period can be referred to as the 'later' Iron Age (Haselgrove 1987b; Hill 1999; 2002) with a distinctive Aysleford-Swarling type late Iron Age absent in such areas. Whilst it is tempting to do this in the region many late Iron Age aspects do exist on some sites. It is important to recognise that those elements of material culture and settlement regarded as 'middle' or 'late' Iron Age are as much cultural as chronological constructs (Willis 1999). The existence of an identifiable late Iron Age therefore cannot be regarded as purely indicating late Iron Age activity and vice-versa but signify the adoption or consumption of certain material culture traits. The change in pottery types for example, should be considered in what such changes imply in changes in foodways, exchange systems and social relations as much as reflecting a chronological phase.

It is also important to consider the extent to which such changes or adoptions of such traits were regionally specific. Initial analysis suggests that the adoption of late Iron Age material was more common in the south and east of the region and the reasons for this are discussed more fully in chapter 4. The adoption for instance of the Durotrigan wares in the south for example, dated conventionally to the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC, appears earlier than the adoption of wheel thrown wares in the north and could be argued as reflecting cultural differences across the region, as well as chronological one. If, however, the early Severn Valley wares can be pushed back in to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, for which there appears to be some limited evidence (Timby 1999; Willis 2000) this difference may be less real. In each case the 'late' Iron Age has to be regarded as regionally and even site specific, having importance and meaning within its cultural context.

This has further consequences for defining the existence of 'late' Iron Age activity on a number of early Roman sites. Previous assessment of the region, primarily from a Roman perspective, has tended to dismiss the existence of pre-conquest phases at many late Iron Age sites (e.g. Swan 1975; Clarke 1993). However, combination of pottery evidence and stray finds may imply that on some sites very early Roman or even pre-conquest phases may have existed and been important. This has major implications for the role of such sites (including

Bagendon, but also Kingscote, Weston-under-Penyard, Syreford/Wycomb, Uley-West Hill) in the immediate pre-conquest period and the nature (and reasons) for settlement change in the early/mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD. In addition, if earlier dating can be proposed for many of the pottery assemblages at some of the other sites, such as the enclosures on the Welsh side of the Severn, at Caldicot for example, and in Somerset at Hole Ground, Lawrence Weston etc, this has implications for the nature (and date) of settlement and social change around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC/AD (see above and see Ch. 8).

In order to create the narratives of settlement and social change, the dating of all sites with sufficient material have been re-assessed. The results will act as broad frameworks which may highlight periods or aspects of social change in the period from 800 BC –AD100 and assess the extent to which such process of change were related to individual sites and communities or part of larger, local, regional or inter-regional process of settlement and social change (see Chapter 6). From here on, the Late Bronze Age is referred to as *LBA*; early Iron Age as *EIA*, middle Iron Age as *MIA*, late Iron Age as *LIA*. For the reasons discussed above, where necessary the period from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC – 1<sup>st</sup> century AD is referred to as the ‘*later*’ Iron Age identifying the ‘*late*’ (or *latest*) Iron Age only as specific, cultural and contextual element of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. *MIA* is used only to refer to material prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC or when referring to dating given by reports or other sources. In the south of the region, chronology may be slightly different with the ‘*late*’ Iron Age beginning slightly earlier in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Further detailed discussion can be found in Ch 4/6/8 and for some sites in Appendix 1b<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> For reasons of space Appendix 1b is a much shortened version of the site analysis

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Morphological Framework**

The nature of settlement form and location has long been regarded as reflecting the nature of social organisation (Clarke 1972; Hingley 1984a, b; Moore 1986). To determine the nature of settlement morphology over the study area a framework for settlement form was established using both cropmark data and excavated examples. The idea was that this should be a loose framework in order that variation within and between regions could be identified, in settlement form, patterning and landscape organisation. In turn, such variation might reflect differences in the perception of space and social organisation. This chapter will identify variations in settlement form and patterning on the broad scale using primarily cropmark data from three intensively studied areas of the region. Chapter 5 then examines the use of space and form of the settlement on a site by site scale, examining the nature of use of space within the region and over time. Chapter 6 combines this information to assess the changing nature of landscape, settlement and social organisation on a regional basis.

#### **4.1. The role of cropmark evidence in studying Iron Age societies**

Aerial reconnaissance has been an important element of site detection in the Cotswold-Severn region and provides the largest source of information for non-hillfort settlement in the study area. Despite a large amount of air photography throughout the region, coverage is varied with particular concentrations in the eastern Cotswolds and upper Thames valley. These areas have been a particular focus for aerial survey and analysis with detailed surveys by Leech (1977) and the RCHME (1976) providing a large corpus of cropmark sites. By the early 1980s sufficient data existed for Hingley (1984a, b) to develop social analysis studies which sought to explain the differences in settlement types. Air survey has continued since with a number of new sites being recorded (Darvill and Hingley 1982; Darvill 1988) although the vast majority of cropmarks remain unpublished. Recent re-assessment of the air photographs from a small portion of the upper Thames and Cotswolds, partly covered by the 1976 survey, showed a threefold increase in the number of recognised 'sites' (Moore 1999). This survey emphasised the increase in cropmarks in the last 25 years making the incorporation of this material into the analysis of Iron Age settlement in the region a priority. In addition, more recent photos provide additional details on the nature and scale of previously noted sites. This

can be seen with a cluster of sites in the Northleach area where recent photos have revealed far larger and more complex spreads of banjo enclosures than previously suspected. The suggestion that a threshold has been reached for site detection (Bewley 1994) appears to be unfounded and continued survey emphasises the effect crop types and growing conditions can have on the number and level of detail of cropmarks that can be revealed. Never the less, in certain areas we are establishing a detailed picture of land use in the Iron Age/Romano-British period, which needs placing within a wider archaeological context. Whilst accepting some of the criticisms of cropmark assessments by Robbins (1997) and Chadwick (1999), differences in the cropmark evidence between and within regions needs to be addressed. Such critiques have also been less successful in providing ways forward in addressing cropmark material, tending instead to retreat in to intra-site analyses of individual settlements.

In the southern part of the study area aerial reconnaissance has also been important, including survey by Leech (1978). More recently Bastide (2000) undertook a morphological analysis of enclosures in south west England and Brittany, which has included assessment of sites in Somerset, although working only from published sources.

There is no accurate data on air coverage at present, although there are indications that it has particularly focused around the visible monuments such as Bagendon and the more productive soils, such as the Thames gravels, whilst other areas may have been neglected. Detailed assessment of aerial photograph evidence from a number of adjacent areas also exist, including Warwickshire (Hingley 1989), the Welsh Marches (Whimster 1989, Jackson 1999) and Wessex (Palmer 1984) enabling us to put the Severn-Cotswolds data in to a wider perspective.

#### *4.1.1. Current approaches to cropmark landscapes and alternative perspectives*

A significant failing of recent analyses of aerial photographic evidence is the lack of explicit definitions of what constitutes a 'cropmark site'. Such 'sites' are often treated as distinct entities, inevitably simplifying them and divorcing them from their wider landscape (e.g. Whimster 1989; Bastide 2000). A handful of recent discussions of cropmark landscapes (e.g. Robbins 1997) have criticised previous approaches and in particular highlighted how many studies have viewed sites as 'static' entities, rather than living settlements in a changing landscape.

These critiques have raised a number of important issues. Primarily, the way in which a 'site' is defined, a problem that occurs with all studies and is shown in the comparison between

excavated sites and cropmark sites. Invariably, when comprehensively excavated, enclosures rarely prove to be clearly defined sites, but instead represent a palimpsest of features resulting from the reworking and redefining of a site within ever-changing roles in the landscape (cf. Chadwick 1999, 160). At Birdlip, for example, what might seem to be a simple enclosure, in fact represents a number of enclosures possibly occupied successively. We have to be cautious in over simplifying the nature of these sites in a morphological framework. Further dangers exist in assessing the density of sites from cropmarks. Many may not be contemporary for instance, whilst on the other hand it seems likely that cropmarks significantly under-represent prehistoric settlements, making many estimations of site density likely to be underestimates.

Whilst work by Hingley (1984a) in particular has usefully discussed the possible difference in functional, social and symbolic roles between enclosed and unenclosed settlements, such analyses tend to generalise about a variety of sites often ignoring their specific roles and histories. Thus, when assessing the cropmark evidence although generalisations may be made concerning site types and site patterning, it should be remembered that each site had its own specific history and place in the landscape. Despite this, analysis of the settlements will attempt to study the relationship of sites to their landscape and each other in order to ascertain further the place of these sites in the landscape.

Cropmark material is especially useful in elucidating the nature of Iron Age settlement in areas where excavation has been limited. Due to the growing reliance on developer funded excavations, Iron Age sites tend to be discovered as a result of urban development and road schemes (e.g. Mudd *et al* 1999; Parry 1998; 1999). Consequently, areas with limited development, such as the Forest of Dean and much of the southern Cotswolds between Bath and Cirencester, have considerably less excavated evidence (Chapter 2). Cropmark coverage has the benefit of beginning to fill in such gaps, although the lack of excavation of whole classes of cropmark sites in certain regions inevitably inhibits discussion of their position in the wider Iron Age landscape, settlement and society, as for example with banjo enclosures in the Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire Cotswolds. As a result, inferences over their date, function and role are necessarily heavily influenced by the better studied sites in Wessex, although drawing such parallels on morphological grounds is obviously problematic. There is an additional danger of seeing areas with large cropmark corpuses, such as the Cotswolds and Thames Valley, as somehow archaeologically richer than areas, such as the Severn valley and Forest of Dean, where cropmark formation is less pronounced.

An additional problem with many morphological analyses of cropmark enclosures is a tendency to view them as abstract units rather than as settlements within a living, inter-related landscape (cf. Ingold 1994, Taylor 1997). Recent phenomenological approaches have indicated the need to integrate landscape and settlements (Tilley 1994, Bradley 1999) in order to develop an understanding of how sites were viewed and experienced, beyond a purely 'functional' analysis. Despite the popularity of such approaches, they have tended to be restricted to excavated sites (cf. Parker-Pearson 1994; Hill 1995) and the wealth of cropmark evidence from the period has rarely been approached in such a way<sup>16</sup>. Despite the obvious problems in attempting such analyses with the cropmark data a number of approaches may be taken and a number of such studies are starting to emerge (e.g. Wigley *forthcoming a*). This study intends to attempt a limited study of cropmark landscapes in order to examine the relationship between landscape and settlement location and architecture.

Attempting to view cropmark material in such a way raises further issues over the problems of understanding sites purely from 2-dimensional representations. Bastide's (2000) study, for example, places an emphasis on the morphological similarities between sites from 2D plots. The danger in such studies is to ignore the role of other factors in the topographic placement and architecture of settlements that may reveal more about the nature of the settlement. Recent work on the placement of hillforts for example reveals their possible roles in the local and wider topography of the landscape (Hamilton 2000). Elsewhere, minor variations in topography have also been shown to be important in the location of enclosures (Taylor 1997, 1999; Moore *forthcoming c*) stressing how more detailed analysis of the location of cropmark sites is important. In addition, further study of the nature of enclosures and boundaries is needed in order to understand how such boundaries were perceived and acted in the landscape. Attempts at such an approach are discussed below but it is clear that cropmark data provides a great deal of potential for more dynamic approaches.

The incorporation of upstanding earthwork monuments is problematic in an analysis of cropmark material. The survival of such sites is often due to specific preservation conditions, for example under permanent pasture, rather than necessarily size or function. Although size is a factor in preservation of many larger hillforts, this is not always the case and there are several comparable to cropmarks in the study areas, especially in the southern part of the study area (Areas 2) and in south east Wales (Driver 1995; Gwilt *forthcoming*), where large areas of the landscape are under permanent pasture. This study has consequently included earthwork (and excavated) sites alongside cropmark sites without special differentiation.

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<sup>16</sup> But see Chadwick (1999) and Robbins (1997) for rare attempts

#### *4.1.2. Defining morphological groups*

The division of cropmarks into classificatory groups based on morphological characteristics is necessarily subjective and problematic (cf. Moore *forthcoming c*). Recent studies of cropmark evidence have resulted in a number of different classificatory approaches being taken (e.g. Palmer 1984; Whimster 1989; Bewley 1994; Bastide 2000) dividing sites into groups based on various morphological characteristics. Such assessments necessarily imply that the shape of a settlement (particularly enclosures) has chronological and functional implications. Recent analyses have also regarded the shape of settlements as having inherent symbolic and social meanings (Hingley 1984a; Bastide 2000).

Bastide's approach divided enclosures on a morphological tree; sub-dividing sites between more and more refined classifications. Such approaches are problematic, neglecting to emphasize that the classificatory groups are modern constructs rather than necessarily reflecting any cognitive categories that existed in the past. In addition, enclosures can often be placed in two different morphological groups, suggesting that these classificatory groups are perhaps overly complex. Such divisions are therefore as much a product of our own modern desire to classify and put features into 'boxes' rather than defining a real symbolic or functional difference in the past. Similar problems exist with Whimster's (1989) classificatory groups. For example, can we really be sure of a functional or symbolic differences between some of the 'D-shaped hybrid' enclosures and some 'short quadrilateral' enclosures? Such systems suffer from a pseudo-scientific approach towards site classification.

With these problems in mind it is perhaps more useful to retain relatively broad based morphological groups, as suggested by Wise (2000) in her recent survey of Tweeddale. Within these groups discussion of variation in morphology may be discussed. It is important to discuss morphological groups if we accept that settlement architecture was important in reflecting the communities' view of space, in reflecting social organisation on the household and community levels and/or had possible cosmological references (e.g. Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994; Hill 1996). This survey takes a broad based approach but will attempt to discuss smaller morphological groups within the broad categories where it is regarded as reflecting significant chronological, functional or cultural differences.

#### *4.1.3. Dating Cropmark sites*

Dating of cropmarks is a contentious and problematic area and has been a focus for debate by cropmark assessments (Bewley 1994; Taylor 1999), particularly for certain categories of sites, such as rectangular and sub rectangular enclosures. This group is large and probably heterogeneous including a variety of enclosures, some of which may be of Romano-British date rather than Iron Age. At present assessment of such a date often goes on the 'rectangularness' of the enclosure with a subjective view that the more rectangular the enclosure the more likely it is to be Roman. Such divisions are highly subjective and rely on ideas of Roman exactness, ignoring rectilinear sites of 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC date such as that at Beckford (Oswald 1974)

For a number of undated cropmarks fieldwalking finds may suggest possible dates. For example, LIA coins from the complex enclosure at Frampton Mansell may suggest a late date for the site (or at least late activity in the area). Similarly in the north Cotswolds field walking has produced dating material from above a number of sites. However, excavation has produced evidence of Iron Age activity at a number of sites, such as Frocester and The Bowsings, which on fieldwalking finds could have been dated Roman-British indicating that surface finds should be viewed with caution. Many earlier sites will produce little or no surface finds, given the rarity and fragility of early (and to some extent later) Iron Age pottery.

#### *4.1.4 Methodology*

Two areas were chosen for study and comparison of morphology with sites elsewhere in the region, and because they enabled comparison of apparent differences noted in analysis of settlement and landscape histories from excavated data (see Ch. 6) and between two varying landscapes of north and south. A separate study of the Bredon Environs (Area 3) was also undertaken to provide a comparison of another different landscape and to analyse this area on its own merits. These areas are not intended to be representative of the area as a whole and can only be regarded as convenient units with which to study varying aspects of Iron Age settlement and landscape in the region. They have the advantage of containing the varying types of landscape in the study area. Other parts of the study area, including the Forest of Dean, south east Wales, south Gloucestershire and Avon suffer from a poor cropmark data set, primarily because of differences in land use (urban areas, pasture, alluvium and woodland). However, examples from these areas both cropmark, earthwork and excavated are compared and discussed alongside the relevant data from Areas 1-3 (Fig. 4.1.4.1).

***Area 1: Cotswolds, Gloucester Vale and upper Thames valley (1330 km sq.) (Fig. 4.1.1. & 4.1.4.2)(Appendix 3)***

Dominated by the Cotswolds Hills, this area also incorporates part of the upper Thames valley and a section of the lower-middle Severn valley. The area varies considerably in landscape types and it is also incorrect to view the Cotswold Hills as a uniform landscape, with a range of soil types, varying in the types of agriculture they can support. This should be regarded very differently from those areas (and sites) that have easy access to the well-watered valleys, such as the Frome.

The survey area contains two large conurbations, Cheltenham and Gloucester, which may have affected site recognition. However, the large amount of rescue excavation as a result of higher rates of development in these areas, has meant that both towns have produced a number of sites with evidence of Iron Age activity, a factor which can also be seen at smaller towns, such as Cirencester and Bishops Cleeve. Land use within this area is also likely to have had an effect on site distribution. The area to the east of Cirencester tends to have a higher percentage of arable land favourable for cropmark detection. In contrast the steep valleys to the west and along the Cotswold scarp have a greater density of pasture and woodland, obscuring cropmarks. The Severn valley is dominated by pasture and has thick layers of alluvium and colluvium (Darvill and Fulton 1995, 176), contributing to the limited evidence of Iron Age settlement. Excavations at Frocester and elsewhere indicate the extent to which aerial photograph coverage is probably misrepresentative of sites numbers and types in such areas.

***Area 2: Mendip hills and Somerset levels (1400 km sq.)(Fig. 4.1.1)***

This area also contains varied types of terrain. The Mendip hills occupy the northern area with gorges such as that at Cheddar bisecting them. To the south the area is dominated by the Somerset levels, predominantly marshland in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC, with the Polden hills to the south. The Mendips are not as highly susceptible to cropmark formation as the Cotswolds due to the greater pastoral use although some areas have been productive. This has led to often more upstanding earthworks remaining in the area including possible Iron Age enclosures, as at Avelines Hole and in the form of relic field systems of varying types and

date including lynchets and co-axial systems, as at Butcombe (Fowler 1970) and Charney Down<sup>17</sup> (Grimes 1960).

Differences in material culture and potentially socio-political organisation in the later Iron Age between the north and south of the region have long been noted (e.g. Hawkes 1961; Peacock 1968; Cunliffe 1982; 1991; Sharples 1991b) make any differences in settlement form of particular interest. The density of sites to the eastern half of the survey area is a product of both air coverage and more a product of cropmark susceptible soils and landscapes.

### *Area 3. The Bredon Hill Environs (see Fig. 6.1.1). (360sq km)*

The area of the confluence of the rivers Severn and north Avon has long been recognised as particularly productive of cropmarks. The area contains the limestone outcrop of Bredon Hill and the gravel terraces of the Carrant brook floodplain, River Severn and north Avon as well as the edge of the Cotswold escarpment. No major conurbations exist but smaller urban areas include Tewkesbury and Evesham both which have been shown (Hannan 1993; Edwards and Hurst 2000) to have masked a variety of settlements.

## **4.2. The morphological framework<sup>18</sup>**

### *4.2.1 Rectilinear and sub-rectangular enclosures<sup>19</sup> (Fig. 4.1.4.2a; 4.2.1.1a, b)*

Rectilinear and sub rectangular enclosures have long been seen as an important element of Iron Age settlement in the Cotswolds (Hingley 1984a, Parry 1998a) and it is unsurprising that they form the largest number of settlements in Areas 1 and 3, with 165 examples in Area 1(54%). The high proportion of rectilinear enclosures may partly be due to their ease of recognition and the diversity in date and type.

Despite the view of rectilinear enclosures as a distinct settlement type there is a great deal of variation in form. These include the more angular examples with rectangular corners, such as those at Temple Guiting and sub rectangular examples, often with more rounded corners. The variety within this group can be seen in Fig 4.2.1.1a,b and also in the sub groups of

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<sup>17</sup> Actually out of the detailed survey area. The field systems of the area are discussed in relation to other landscape use in Chapter 6.

<sup>18</sup> A selection of sites have been plotted at 1:5000 to illustrate the variety of site types in the region.

<sup>19</sup> Here on referred to as 'SRE'

trapezoidal and conjoined enclosures which share many of the same characteristics. Often the more angular the form of the enclosure the more likely it has been to be regarded as Romano-British rather than Iron Age. However, excavation at sites such as Beckford (Oswald 1974) and elsewhere in Britain suggests such a simple correlation cannot be made and that form varies throughout the Iron Age/Romano-British period.

A number of rectilinear enclosures have been excavated, although in almost all cases this has been partially and without detailed examination of the interior or of features beyond the main enclosure. Limited investigation has been undertaken at sites, including Naunton (Foster 1994), Middle Ground, Lower Ground (Marshall 2001) and Guiting Power (Saville 1979). More detailed excavations have been undertaken at Birdlip (Fig. 4.2.1.1a:t)(Parry 1998), The Bowsings (Fig. 4.2.1.1a:m) (Marshall 1996) and Frocester (Fig. 4.2.1.1a:q) (Price 2000). In most cases the limited nature of the investigation and a lack of published reports makes detailed comparison difficult. This perhaps reveals the extent to which the term 'SRE' may mask a greater deal of diversity in form, date and function than is implied by the limited information available on these sites. Just beyond Area 1 and 2 a number of other rectilinear enclosures enable broader comparisons in date and function, including Aston Mill, Worcestershire (Dinn and Evans 1990); Bathampton Meadows, Bath (Davenport 1994) and further afield at sites such as Barton Court, Oxfordshire (Miles 1986) and Barford Park, Warwickshire (Cracknell and Hingley 1994).

The limited nature of these investigations has tended to reinforce the impression of rectilinear enclosures as isolated and independent settlements. Elsewhere, it has been shown that open settlements can exist beyond the margins of the main enclosure within more complex settlements and field systems (e.g. Biggins *et al* 1997). For example, evidence from Birdlip (Parry 1998) indicates the enclosure may have existed within a group of enclosures or that successive enclosures may have been built near by in succeeding periods; possibly suggesting the movement of the enclosure across a small area being rebuilt successively<sup>20</sup> whilst the cluster of pits at Guiting Power (Saville 1979) is outside the main enclosure.

The idea of the isolated enclosure maybe more a product of a reliance on cropmark evidence added to a lack of excavation beyond the main enclosure. Evidence from the area suggests instead a number of possibilities; that enclosures were successively abandoned and rebuilt close by, or that clusters of enclosures existed in close proximity contemporaneously. Both cases may be true at the same time, however the current chronological framework rarely

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<sup>20</sup> Which may also be true of Barford Park Farm (Richard Hingley *pers comm.*)

allows sequences to be untangled. Examples do exist, however, to indicate that at least some abandonment and moving was taking place, such as between The Park and The Bowsings (Marshall 1996), whilst elsewhere there is evidence that many may also have been contemporary, such as at Highgate and Birdlip (Fig 6.1.2.3).

Few of the enclosures retain evidence of banks associated with the ditch and it is difficult with most examples to be sure whether the bank was internal or external. Parry (1998a) has suggested an internal bank for the Birdlip enclosure on the basis of a lack of internal features in this area and slumping of bank material. The same has been suggested at Cradley (Hoverd 2000), but based on the belief that banks were usually internal. In fact, sites from elsewhere in the country show this was not always the case. At other enclosures, like Beckford (Oswald 1974), the existence of pits close to the inside of the enclosure ditch may indicate no internal bank.

The functional role of this group of enclosure probably varies but a number seem to share some similar characteristics. Examples investigated by Marshall in the northern Cotswolds for example appear to have in common a single pit, interpreted as a grain silo, in one corner of the enclosure (Fig 5.2.2.2.3; Marshall 2001, 100). This can be seen at the enclosures at The Bowsings, Lower Barn Middle Ground and the polygonal enclosure at Cold Aston (Marshall 1999). Such an arrangement appears to be in contrast to elsewhere in southern Britain where more storage pits would be expected. The picture is by no means universal and at both Guiting Power (Saville 1979) and Birdlip larger clusters of storage pits were revealed. Those sites with just a single pit may have performed a distinct role or indicate a different size or structure of social grouping<sup>21</sup>. It is uncertain how exactly storage pits functioned (Reynolds 1979) and although some have argued for single use only (Cunliffe 1992; 1995, 84) one must surely assume that these pits were reused over some period of time. The existence of only a single pit at these sites requires further investigation and relating to the economic basis of these settlements, having possible implications for the extent of arable at these sites. The relation to the community structure of these sites also requires more analysis and might imply these enclosures consisted of small communities based on a single household group<sup>22</sup>.

Within the wider group a number of smaller sub groups could be identified:

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<sup>21</sup> The possibility that a lack of investigation beyond the boundaries of these enclosures has missed external clusters of storage pits (as perhaps seen at Guiting Power) cannot be ruled out, although the role of a single internal silo pit would still need explaining.

<sup>22</sup> Further discussion of the implications of settlement form on social organisation in the period can be found in Chapter 6.

### *Conjoined enclosures (Fig. 4.1.4.2b; 4.2.1.1q-u)*

Although only 10 examples of conjoined enclosures were noted from Area 1 the number is perhaps misleading. Excavation and geophysical survey of a number of rectilinear enclosures such as Frocester, Birdlip, and Middle Ground (Marshall 2001) and [1/132], have indicated how these enclosures are often part of wider conjoined complexes. In addition the division between complex and agglomerated settlements and conjoined enclosures is a fine one. Despite these problems differences do clearly exist between those examples of SRE enclosures with attached 'annex' enclosures and the more discreet examples. The reasons for the differences may be numerous, relating to chronology with the conjoined enclosures representing long term use and adaptation over time. In some cases the conjoined areas may in fact represent different phases, as suggested at Wakerley in the East Midlands (Gwilt 1997) and this appears to be the case at Birdlip (Parry 1998a) although elsewhere at Frocester for example, this is not the case. In such cases where the enclosure are contemporary it may have repercussions on how the main enclosure boundary had become to be regarded, surely making the main enclosure less dramatic?

To this groups can be added non-rectilinear conjoined enclosures, such as that at Cribbs Causeway in South Gloucestershire (Fig. 4.2.1.2; King 1998). Here, the assumed living area including roundhouse does not appear to be particularly different from the conjoined irregular enclosures, presumably used for other activities or livestock. A similar enclosure may have recently been found through survey near Shapwick (Chris Gerrard *pers comm*). These seem to have few affinities with the enclosures at Frocester and Birdlip, where there appears to be more evidence of a defined 'living space' with peripheral enclosures. At Cribbs, in contrast, the living area cannot be immediately distinguished from other enclosures and they seem to have more in common with enclosures in the east Midlands, such as Dalton Parlours and Scrooby Top (e.g. Whimster 1989; Chadwick 1999).

### *SRE Bivallate enclosures*

Multivallate enclosures are relatively rare in Area 1 apart from some of the larger 'hillfort' enclosures and only 7 rectilinear or SRE bivallate enclosures were noted. The most notable example being the latter phases of the excavated enclosure at Frocester (Price 2000). Other examples occur at Fairford [1/312] (Fig.4.2.1.1b), now apparently destroyed and at Shipton [1/282] (Fig.4.2.1.1b). A number of bivallate rectilinear enclosures, particularly those with more rectangular corners appear to be Roman sites, whilst Hailey Wood (Moore 2001) may

be a Roman temple. Where such sites can clearly be seen to be of Roman date they have not been included in the survey<sup>23</sup>.

Bivallate enclosures appear to be far rarer in Areas 1 and 2 compared with other areas of the region including the Bredon Environs (See below), south Wales (Fig. 6.1.6.1; Driver 1995) and further afield in the Welsh Marches (Whimster 1989). The reasons for this are uncertain but may imply different cultural preferences. To analyse this difference further the 'meaning' and role of bivallation needs discussion and its relation to status or division between the inside and outside of the enclosure need understanding.

### *Trapezoidal sites*

Within the SRE category a number are trapezoidal rather than rectilinear, including sites such as Frocester. Trapezoidal enclosures may also indicate a symbolic importance in the construction of the enclosure. For example, placing the entrance on the longer side of the enclosure, as at The Bowsings and Frocester (Fig. 4.2.1.1), may have emphasised the size or status of the enclosure. This is particularly evident at The Bowsings, where the entrance is positioned towards the hill edge so that people approaching across the neck of land linking it to the plateau would have to detour around the enclosure and enter on the far side. Marshall (1991) interpreted this layout as a defensive device. However, it may just as well indicate an intricate symbolism associated with the method of entering and approaching enclosures manifested in enclosure design.

### *Chronology*

Dating evidence relies on the few excavated examples from the study area and further afield, which suggests that most SRE date to the later Iron Age, with a possible horizon for this type of enclosed settlement around the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Chapter 3). A number appear to have continued to be occupied or built in the latest Iron Age, some developing into Roman settlements, as at Frocester. The Bowsings provided a C14 date in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, apparently replacing an earlier 'conjoined' enclosure at The Park (Marshall 1996, 1999) dating to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. This might suggest a later date for trapezoidal enclosures, although the pattern is likely to be complex.

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<sup>23</sup> Although on many such sites Iron Age activity/occupation is always possible. At Hailey Wood possible Iron Age pottery and coins have been found (Moore 2001).

Many sites have produced evidence of Romano-British activity, but this does not necessarily indicate a purely Roman presence. Despite a paucity of pre-Roman material recovered in fieldwalking, excavation at Birdlip and The Bowsings revealed large Iron Age enclosures. Beckford has late dating from the main enclosure ditch consisting of pottery from possibly as late as 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Oswald 1974,1) although Oswald does not clearly identify where in the fill this material comes from and it is possible that the ditch is earlier. Beckford, however, similar to sites such as Barford in Warwickshire (Cracknell and Hingley 1994), suggests that many of these enclosures continued to be used in to the latest Iron Age.

The existence of a number of palisade phases at Beckford may indicate that palisades, at least on this site, were earlier than the enclosure ditch. None of the material though appears to indicate anything other than a middle-late date for these features. In addition, despite Oswald's claim (1974), it cannot be confirmed that the palisades and enclosure ditch were not contemporary. Despite the imprecise chronology for these enclosures it appears that they occur predominantly in the later Iron Age, appearing around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC with no examples yet dated to the earlier 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC (see Chapter 3). The significance of this will be discussed elsewhere, but appears to imply a social or cultural divide in settlement form between the earlier and later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC (see Chapters 5 and 6).

#### ***4.2.2 Curvilinear enclosures (Fig. 4.1.4.2e; 4.2.2.1)***

In comparison with other areas, such as the Welsh Marches and south west England, curvilinear enclosures are rare in the study area and do not appear to have been a large component of settlement patterns. 29 examples were noted from Area 1 ranging in form, including D shaped enclosures and possible palisaded site at [1/134]. This site is adjacent to a banjo enclosure (Fig. 4.2.5.1b) possibly implying they were contemporary. Usually, such sites are considered EIA but the lack of comparable examples from the region makes such an assumption problematic.

Within this group can be included a number of sites which have in the past been termed hillforts(see below), as at Windrush Camp (1.1ha in extent), a large sub circular enclosure. Geophysical survey of the site revealed little occupation inside the main enclosure, but did find traces of occupation outside including possible curvilinear features, possibly indicating the main enclosure was not permanently occupied or was used as a stock enclosure<sup>24</sup>. It may

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<sup>24</sup> Possibly similar to Chastleton Camp, Oxfordshire (Leeds 1931; RCHME 1976). A similar lack of activity inside the enclosure has been found at Segsbury hillfort in Berkshire (Gosden and Lock 1998, 9).

be better therefore to see this enclosure as serving different role to many of the other so-called 'hillforts' in the region.

Within the category of curvilinear enclosures, a sub group of D-shaped enclosures exists with examples in Area 1 at Bunnage (Fig. 4.2.2.1) 1/39, SP1503 1/14 and Site 1/148). These two in particular share morphological similarities and can also be compared to the sites at Hockberry noted by Darvill (1988) and similar enclosure also to the south. The location, usually close to well watered valleys, of these sites may also imply some particular function and Bunnage is linked to a linear possibly indicating some stock role. A number of D-shaped enclosures are also found in eastern Somerset, some of which may have affinities with the EIA site at Longbridge Devrill Cow Down near by (Hawkes 1994).

### *Chronology*

Curvilinear enclosures are often regarded as EIA, and the curvilinear, multivallate enclosure at Groundwell Farm (Gingell 1981) and EIA D-shaped enclosure at Longbridge Devrill-Cow Down (Hawkes 1994) may support this theory, however, there is insufficient fieldwork from the region to determine this.

### **4.2.3 Polygonal and 'irregular' enclosures (Fig. 4.2.3.1; 4.1.4.2d)**

This category is again varied. In some cases division from the trapezoidal SRE enclosures (with 4 sides) may be somewhat arbitrary and the differences relatively insignificant. The enclosure at Temple Guiting (Fig.4.2.3.1), for instance which shares significant similarities with some rectilinear enclosures. Elsewhere, significant differences from SRE enclosures suggest the choice of polygonal form represents a distinct group, be it for symbolic, social, chronological or functional reasons.

The unusual, 6 sided enclosure at Preston (Fig. 4.2.3.1a (h)) is the only one of its kind known from the area. Finds from the enclosure do not indicate a distinct function for the site and cropmarks indicate a single roundhouse in the unexcavated interior. If enclosure shape was an important symbolic tool, then this exceptional type may have had some significance. The entrance faces north-west, in contrast to the more common east-south east orientation of most enclosures in the region and elsewhere in Britain (see below). A similar polygonal enclosure from the Welsh Marches in Whimster's corpus (1989, fig. 25;17; Fig. 4.2.3.1a (g)) also has an entrance facing in an unconventional direction; north. Similar polygonal enclosures have also been found at Cold Aston in Gloucestershire (Fig. 4.2.3.1; Marshall 1999) and further north

near Birmingham (Neil Holbrook *pers comm*). The rarity of this form of enclosure could imply some special function or role.

Within this group are some of the complex irregular enclosures noted specifically from the southern and eastern Cotswolds, including the site at Frampton Mansell (1/52). These may have shared similar roles to banjo enclosures as some examples share some similarities in form. Some of these have internal polygonal enclosures as at Avening (Fig.4.2.3.1a (c)) and Eastleach-Turville (Fig. 6.1.4.7 [1/238]). The presence of antenna ditches and possible stock corralling areas appears to indicate that these sites served particular functions, possibly similar to the banjo enclosures. Retrieval of LIA coinage from one site at Frampton Mansell may imply a late date for these sites.

Another possibly distinct form of irregular enclosure is the small enclosures visible at a number of locations on the Cotswold uplands. The example at Avening is relatively typical in being less defined and smaller than most SRE enclosures with some related to field systems (Fig 4.2.3.1b), although the traces of these are relatively indistinct. These sites may be comparable to the irregular enclosure at Aldsworth, also related to a co-axial field system (Fig 6.1.2.11; RCHME 1976, 2).

### *Chronology*

Preston, of later Iron Age probably ending before the latest Iron Age (Mudd et al 1999)<sup>25</sup>, is the only excavated polygonal enclosure. The similar date to rectilinear enclosures, suggests ditched enclosures were largely a later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC phenomenon, irrespective of the nature of the enclosure.

#### **4.2.4 Unenclosed and agglomerated settlement (Fig. 4.2.4.1c)**

Although small in number compared to SRE enclosures, unenclosed sites make up a significant proportion of settlement types from the region, with 31 examples recognised in Area 1. The term 'open' or 'unenclosed' settlement is particularly misleading and probably incorporates a variety of different settlement types, including hut circle sites and the agglomerations of settlement features not constrained by an overall enclosing ditch seen at sites like Stanway-Hailes [42], Beckford II and in the upper Thames valley. The supposedly 'open' settlements of the upper Thames valley and sites such as Hallen in the Avon levels

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<sup>25</sup> As does dating from a somewhat similar enclosure near Birmingham recently excavated by Cotswold Archaeology (Neil Holbrook *pers comm*).

actually consist of a number of settlement components including small enclosures, often containing roundhouses. In addition, the enclosures may have had unenclosed elements related to them or existed as part of wider settlement complex.

It has frequently been suggested that unenclosed settlements are under-represented in aerial reconnaissance surveys or mistaken as barrows (Jackson 1999a). A number of recent studies, such as that by Bastide (2000), tend to ignore the role of unenclosed sites despite the fact they appear to have been an important element of settlement patterns. This seems particularly true of the Avon and Mendip area and other areas of the survey area where unenclosed sites (or more accurately sites that are less susceptible to cropmarks) such as Cannard's Grave (Birbeck 2000), Butcombe (Fig. 4.2.4.1a; Fowler 1970) and Chew Park (Fig. 4.2.4.1a; Rahtz and Greenfield 1977) are more common.

Within the encompassing term 'open' settlement may also be placed the lake village settlements of the Somerset levels. It is difficult to classify these sites as their location presumably mitigated against the need for 'enclosure' although Glastonbury at least is enclosed by a palisade or fence (see Chapter 5). In addition to Glastonbury and Meare, examples may be visible at a number of other locations in the levels, represented by a number of apparent roundhouses clustered together on what appear to be small islands of drier land<sup>26</sup>. Examples of these can be seen at 2/4 and 2/7, suggesting Meare and Glastonbury may not have been exceptional and that more such sites existed in the region.

Differences between enclosed and unenclosed settlement have a particular importance for the region since Hingley (1984) drew a distinction between the social and functional role of upland, (Oxfordshire) Cotswold 'enclosed' settlements and the 'unenclosed' settlements of the upper Thames valley. Hingley's study emphasised a symbolic and social role for modes of enclosure, settlement form and location rather than purely functional reasons for settlement morphology. However, Hingley's work placed too much emphasis on seeing a clear distinction between enclosed and unenclosed settlement neglecting to adequately explain the role of enclosures within 'unenclosed' settlements, like those at sites such as Fairford, Lechlade (Fig. 4.2.4.1a) and Beckford II (Fig. 4.2.4.1b). The distinction between enclosed and unenclosed is much less clear and it is apparent that many sites in the region went through unenclosed and enclosed phases. Elsewhere, it appears that enclosures regarded as distinct discreet elements of settlement in fact often existed as part of wider settlement areas.

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<sup>26</sup> Discussion with levels expert Steve Rippon was inconclusive as to the nature of these features and they may also be geological or medieval. They would be worthy of further investigation.

In addition, several excavated enclosed settlements evidently had unenclosed phases. At Frocester for example there are hints of an unenclosed phase prior to the main enclosure (5.2.2.2). Close to the Area 2, a MIA rectangular enclosure at Bathampton Meadows, Bath (Davenport 1994) was also preceded by an unenclosed settlement. Elsewhere, at Guiting Power (Saville 1979) an area of storage pits and other features situated outside the main enclosure implies enclosures were sometimes part of wider areas of occupation or activity. The recovery of a substantial amount of EIA material from outside the entrance of the hillfort at Burhill (Marshall 1989) also suggests that some sites either had unenclosed phases or that occupation of some kind existed beyond the main enclosure.

The role of enclosure within what are often defined as 'complex' unenclosed settlements needs to be addressed. Often within the study area and in the upper Thames Valley enclosures of similar shape and size can be found as part of these unenclosed settlements. In some cases this may be a product of a palimpsest of features and the enclosures may precede or post date the larger settlement whilst in others they appear to have been an integral part. Such settlements indicate the difficulty with morphologically comparison based on the existence of enclosure boundaries and how we regard enclosed or unenclosed settlements.

Unenclosed settlement is likely to have been a more common component of Iron Age settlement in Area 1 than is suggested by the predominance of enclosed settlements. A few examples of unenclosed settlements have been noted though aerial reconnaissance such as I/149, where what appear to be roundhouses are situated amongst a complex of enclosures that may represent a field system and possibly Kemble (King *et al* 1996). Unenclosed settlements, of perhaps a similar nature to those further south, also exist in the Gloucester area at both Roman Fields-Abbeymead and Saintbridge (Atkins 1987). These chance finds due to development possibly indicate the extent that unenclosed settlements may have been far more common in the Severn valley but have yet to be observed. Such sites are also less likely to have survived due to intense ploughing in such areas.

### *Chronology*

Few unenclosed sites have been excavated from the region. They appear to vary significantly in date with later Iron Age example at Claydon Pike (MIA-LIA) (Miles 1984) and Sherbourne House, Lechlade. Elsewhere in the upper Thames the open settlement at Roughground Farm (Allen *et al* 1993) is of EIA date whilst the large unenclosed complex at Shorcote (Hearne and Adam 1999; Hey 2000) dates to the LBA and possibly earliest Iron Age. Further west the possible open site at Kemble is of MIA date (King *et al* 1996).

Further north in the Cotswolds and Severn valley the picture is as complicated. The apparently unenclosed sites at Bourton-on-the-Water (Piper and Catchpole 1996; Coleman and Leah 1998; Barber 1998; Nichols 1999) and those at Saintbridge, Gloucester (Darvill and Timby 1986) and Sandhurst lane, Cheltenham (Leah and Young 2001) dating to the EIA and probably MIA, with the 'unenclosed' settlements at Saintbridge and Abbeymead dating to the mid-LIA (Atkin 1987). The possible unenclosed phase at Frocester<sup>27</sup> appears to pre date the MIA enclosure, suggesting a date in EIA. In general, most unenclosed sites from the Cotswolds and upper Severn tend to be of EIA date with more evidence for later Iron Age unenclosed sites from the upper Thames valley. This is by no means always the case and relies on a sample of sites. If this picture is correct then it would reflect other areas of the country including the Welsh Marches (Jackson 1999b) where a similar sequence of early unenclosed and later enclosed settlement has been noted.

The chronology of the southern sites is somewhat more complicated and may also relate to the different nature of 'unenclosed' sites in that area. The lake villages, which may be termed unenclosed and Hallen (Gardiner *et al* 2000) appear to date from the 3<sup>rd</sup>- 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Cannard's Grave is of EIA-MIA date whilst Chew Park and Dibbles Farm suggests occupation possible from quiet early in the Iron Age, some sites in to the latest Iron Age (Butcombe, Chew Park, Marshfield). There is obvious danger here of classifying all unenclosed sites as representing the same sort of site and this obviously not the case of which there is more detailed discussion in Chapter 5.

#### **4.2.5 Banjo enclosures (Fig. 4.2.5.1)**

Banjo enclosures have been increasingly noted in the region especially in the east Cotswolds extending distribution west from the Oxfordshire Cotswolds. They vary somewhat in form, and the smaller examples are only tentatively identified as banjo enclosures, differing markedly from the larger enclosures, but their location in close proximity to the larger banjo enclosures, for example in the SP1211 area (Fig.6.1.4.3), implies they are related and possibly had similar roles.

All have a number of common characteristics most notably the long elongated entrance way joined to antenna linears. In some cases these were linked to other enclosures as at Ashton Keynes (Fig. 6.1.4.1), Somerton and Easton-Wells [2/44] where two banjos appear to be

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<sup>27</sup> The presence of this unenclosed phase is disputed by the excavator E. Price (*pers comm*)

joined by a trackway. Both the sites at Barnsley (Area 1) and Somerton (to the south of Area 2) show evidence of multi-phases with apparently earlier banjo enclosures superseded by a subsequent enclosure.

Almost all the examples of banjo enclosures occur within a wider complex of enclosures, including rectilinear and irregular enclosures, often linked by linears or trackways (Fig. 6.1.4.1). These complexes appear to indicate that banjo enclosures existed as part of larger settlement systems with each form of enclosure possibly fulfilling different functions. Only one banjo enclosure was noted in Area 2; at Easton-Wells 2/44 and just to the south of Area 2 at Somerton (ST465285; Leech 1978, 75). The earthwork enclosure at Walton (Fig. 4.2.5.1) has been described as a banjo enclosure (Iles 1979; Fasham 1987, Bastide 2000, 104) but has a number of morphological differences. Banjo enclosures were probably more common in the south of the region although perhaps not in such significant numbers as in the north.

### *Chronology*

None of the local banjo enclosures, and only one in Oxfordshire, have been excavated. An evaluation trench at Kiddington, Oxon., produced MIA and LIA pottery (Copeland 2001). The Thames valley sites at Watkins Farm and Mingies Ditch, of MIA date, have been described as 'banjos' (Lambrick 1992, 94), but on morphological grounds they should be regarded as a different phenomena to the complexes discussed above. Unlike other enclosure types there has also been little investigation through fieldwalking and geophysical survey. Despite the growing numbers and apparent importance of banjo enclosures in settlement patterns, this group are still ill understood and virtually undated.

Morphologically similar examples in Dorset provide the closest parallels for the Cotswold banjos. These are generally of a late date although they too have rarely been excavated (Corney 1989, Barrett *et al* 1991). However, investigation of banjo sites in Hampshire, for example Nettlebank Copse (Cunliffe and Poole 2000a) and Micheldever Wood (Fasham 1987), provide earlier dates for some structures although even in such cases focus of activity appears to have been in the LIA. Nettlebank in particular indicates that some had complex histories possibly changing in nature and role over time. Banjo enclosures across the region therefore may vary in form and date and caution should be used in suggesting all are part of the same phenomenon. The Dorset examples, however, appear to provide the closest parallels to the Gloucestershire examples, particularly their relation to complexes of rectilinear and other enclosures. These have produced surface finds of LIA pottery, metalwork and coinage (Barrett *et al* 1991). It seems likely that many of the examples in the study area are of LIA

date but indicates the need for further fieldwork on this monument type to elucidate more about their chronology and function.

#### **4.2.6 Large enclosures and hillforts (Fig. 4.2.6.1a)**

In most assessments of cropmark and other non-hillfort evidence, 'hillforts' are treated as separate entity (cf. Jackson 1999a). This is based on the assumption that certain groups of sites can be defined as 'hillforts' and had a separate role within Iron Age settlement patterns. In an attempt to move away from a general category of hillfort they have been divided on the basis of size (Forde-Johnson 1976, 11; Jackson 1999a) although such definitions remain problematic (see 4.3.3). In order to include 'hillforts' in this survey these sites have been included under the term 'large enclosures', allowing for some of the smaller examples to be compared with other cropmark enclosures which may have served similar roles. This does not imply that some of these larger enclosures did not fulfil specialist roles, distinct from other enclosures, but allows investigation of the nature of the larger enclosures outside the laden term 'hillfort'. For example, a number of the smaller hillforts, such as Windrush Camp and Roel Camp (Figs 4.2.6.1a) do not differ greatly in extent to some of the multivallate sites in areas such as the Welsh Marches (Whimster 1989) and a number of sites in Area 2, described as hillforts have been re-classified as curvilinear enclosures on the basis of size (e.g. Fig.4.2.2.1d, e), thus showing the possible flaw in using a size differentiation. The large 'Irregular' enclosure at Elkstone (1/109) which is over 3ha, for example, and Pitchers curvilinear enclosure (4.5ha: Fig. 4.2.6.1a; 2/76) are larger than a number of hillforts.

In addition to the hillforts amongst this group can be included the earthwork at Bagendon and the 'oppidum' at Salmonsbury. Other large enclosures or hillforts also probably existed and are now destroyed. For example, there are hints of a possible EIA/LBA enclosure beneath Stow-on-the-Wold (Parry 1999) and that the medieval castle at Tetbury may overlie an Iron Age site (GSMR109). This reflects evidence from Malmesbury, to the south of Area 1, where an EIA enclosure has been revealed beneath the medieval city walls (WISMRST89NW200). It seems likely that many such favourable locations, situated on small knolls above rivers had Iron Age occupation on them.

### **4.3. Settlement form in the Severn-Cotswolds**

From the cropmark evidence from Areas 1 and 2 then we can begin to analyse the nature of settlement form, density and location within and between these areas. Elements such as

variation in entrance orientation, morphological groups and density have been examined with a more detailed assessment of the variation in landscape and settlement in Chapter 6.

#### **4.3.1. Entrance orientation**

The vast majority of cropmark enclosures do not provide evidence of entrance location or orientation. In Area 1, 95 enclosures provided evidence of entrance orientation.<sup>28</sup> Amongst those that do, a clear preference for an easterly direction can be seen. Fig 4.3.1.1 shows the orientation of enclosure where entrances could be identified. The graph clearly shows a preference for a south easterly, orientation although a significant number of sites are orientated between NW and SW. The preference for an easterly direction mirrors other areas of Iron Age Britain (Hill 1996, 109; Jackson 1999). There appears to be a greater preference for a SE direction in this study; more than twice as likely as an easterly direction which may suggest slight differences in cultural preferences between this region and Wessex.

Entrance orientation was also plotted by site type in order to determine whether enclosure design may have been related to choices in entrance orientation (Fig. 4.3.1.1/2). Because of the small sample it is difficult to generalise about links between site form and entrance orientation. The difficulties in establishing coherent and valid morphological groups should also be remembered and may distort any relation between site form and entrance orientation. Despite these problems, the recent focus on possible cosmological and/or symbolic involvement in both entrance orientation (e.g. Hill 1996, Oswald 1997) and enclosure form (e.g. Bastide 2000, see above) appears to be borne out by the Severn-Cotswolds data.

A number of patterns are evident, most notably that non-rectilinear enclosures, including curvilinear and polygonal enclosures, have a greater chance of facing in a non-easterly direction, this group includes sites such as the Preston enclosure mentioned above (Mudd *et al* 1999) which, although contemporary to the more common SRE enclosures in the later Iron Age, appear to buck the trend in being a polygonal enclosures with a NW facing entrance. This could reflect kinds of opposition to the 'norm': a possible cultural rejection of the normative cosmology or related to a separate function for these sites. However, as discussed above, evidence from Preston does not suggest that the site is in anyway different to other enclosures of the period.

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<sup>28</sup> in some cases the apparent gaps seen in enclosure ditches may not be entrances but care was taken to exclude those sites where gaps appeared to be the breaks other than entrance gaps.

Other exceptions include Windrush Camp, which has a west facing entrance associated with apparent settlement foci outside the enclosure; this may indicate a particular role or possibly early date for the site. It is often assumed that curvilinear enclosures are earlier than rectilinear sites and their apparent preference for westerly entrances may reflect a chronological difference. In turn, this might indicate that concern with entrance orientation became more marked in the later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC.<sup>29</sup>

Variation in enclosure entrance may also have been regionally distinct and variation within an overall tendency towards the east, reflect local traditions. In the Bredon Hill environs, for example, there is far more variation than might be expected in an admittedly small sample (Fig. 4.3.1.3), with a high proportion with west or south west entrances. In this area also, at least one pair of SRE enclosures has entrances that face each other; for example, at SO979426, suggesting that orientation related in such cases to inter-site relationships. The less rigid adherence to the south east norm is also to some extent reflected by variation in house orientation with those at Conderton showing non-SE orientation and also true of some of the houses at Beckford (Chapter 5). Combined it may suggest a lack of adherence to the south east enclosure orientation which may be more of a Wessex tradition than is usually suggested (e.g. Hill 1996; cf. Pope 2003). Elsewhere, many of the enclosures in Wales (Fig. 6.1.6.1) also have non-easterly facing entrances, again possibly suggesting more variation in enclosure orientation in areas beyond the Thames Valley and Cotswolds.

The data from Area 2 is far smaller with only 18 showing evidence of entrances making comparison with the north difficult. The tendency from those with visible entrances and broader comparison with other sites in Somerset (Bastide 2000) appears to show a similar preference amongst most enclosures and rectilinear in particular, for SE and NE although there is a suggestion of greater diversity in this area (Fig. 4.3.1.4). Western and northern entrances appear common for specific site types such as some of the curvilinear enclosures (2/57 for example) and can be compared with north and west entrances for curvilinear enclosures at Taps Coombe and Cleeve Toot (Fig.4.2.2.1). If, as discussed above, eastern entrances had a cosmological purpose the rejection of this by large numbers of enclosures would imply different attitudes towards space and cosmology in this area. It may be pertinent that the majority of roundhouses at Glastonbury display western or south west facing entrances (Coles and Minnit 1995, 105-7) and may further indicate contrasting regional cultural traditions in the south of the study area.

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<sup>29</sup> Possibly also shown by changes at sites like Danebury where entrances are blocked in later phases.

Although the evidence is limited analysis of the relationship of enclosure entrance to enclosure form raises a number of issues. Recent assessments (e.g. Oswald 1997; Parker-Pearson 1996, 127) have tended to dismiss the significant proportion of sites that reject, what have been perceived by some as 'normative' cosmological behaviour, regarding those sites as exceptions that prove the rule, or seeing them as representing some how 'the other'. The concept of syncretism (see 5.1.3), however, allows us to accept that variation within broad traditions may not necessarily represent opposition but variation both for pragmatic reasons and the reworking of larger over-arching 'ideologies' in a local context. This brief survey, although working on a restricted data set, suggests that further assessment should be undertaken to assess the relation between entrance orientation and settlement form, in order to examine how they may relate to chronological, cultural or functional factors. Initial study indicates that there is potentially far more local and regional variation in enclosure orientation than most studies suggest.

#### *4.3.2 Enclosure size*

Size is one variable with probable implications for the apparent function of enclosures and the social group that occupied them. The size of enclosure could be ascertained from 97 enclosures in Area 1 (Fig.4.3.2.1). Because of the predominance of SRE/Rectilinear enclosures these formed the vast majority of sites where the area could be measured. Those in the hillfort/large enclosure category because of their better preservation are also well represented. The sample therefore is biased by factors such as preservation and is disproportionate between site types. There must be obvious caution in relating enclosure size to similarities in function although size may reflect the size of social group within the enclosure

Previous assessment of enclosure size in the region have general been based on anecdotal evidence rather than defined surveys. Mudd (1999) for example, claims there may be an optimum enclosure size of around 0.38-0.48 ha based on the evidence that the Preston enclosure, along with sites such as Mingies Ditch and Watkins Farm, fit in to this range. Surveys of enclosure size have been undertaken elsewhere in the vicinity of Area 1 both in the Welsh Marches (Jackson 1999b) and Warwickshire (Hingley 1989). These enable comparison with enclosure size with other regions.

Fig. 4.3.2.2 shows the overall range of size for enclosures under 1.5ha, and Fig. 4.3.2.3 by type under 1ha, the predominant size of enclosures. The data, although small for many site types other than SRE enclosures, shows a number of interesting trends. The commonest size

for enclosures ranges between 0.2-0.3 ha but with significant numbers below 0.1ha and many up to 0.6ha. The pattern reflects a similar situation seen in Warwickshire and to some extent the Welsh Marches (Jackson 1999b). The large number of smaller enclosures, less than 0.1ha, also mirrors the situation seen in Warwickshire and to some extent the situation seen in Hertfordshire (Hunn 1996, 7). Overall, however, studies of enclosure size in Hertfordshire and Wessex (Jackson 1999b) shows a greater tendency towards larger enclosures. Study of the cropmarks in the Teesdale area also appears to indicate tendency to slightly larger enclosures, between 0.3-0.5ha (Moore *forthcoming c*). The apparent correlation with the picture in Warwickshire may imply a cultural division between the West Midlands and other areas of the country.

What does variation in enclosure size mean in social terms? Growing evidence supports the notion that social groups within enclosures in the region were small, based around one or two domestic dwellings and probably consisting of no more than an extended household (Ch.5). The tendency towards larger enclosures elsewhere may reflect larger social aggregation in non-hillfort enclosures perhaps even larger social groups or need for more internal space. Alternatively, many of the smaller enclosures may have performed distinct, possible non-habitation functions, from other enclosures and which may have been specific to the Cotswold region.

The group of enclosures smaller than 1ha includes two sites classified as 'hillforts'. This highlights the problems in using the term 'Hillfort'. The size of these sites, comparable to many of the slightly larger enclosures of other types suggests these would perhaps better be described as enclosures and indicates the confusion and problems with roles of sites that can arise from the term hillfort. In contrast, the presence of a number of irregular enclosures in the higher range of sites, in which only the hillforts and larger enclosures are found, may imply that these sites may have served similar roles to those enclosure and might better be seen in that category.

The majority of banjo enclosures in the smallest category (see also Fig.4.2.5.1) contrasts against much larger examples, enclosing nearly a hectare. The smaller enclosures may have performed different roles to larger sites, indicating that banjo enclosures are a heterogeneous group. The smaller enclosures may not have contained much in the way of living areas although a number have evidence of possible hut circles inside. Further investigation of variation in enclosure size is needed. Alongside form and entrance orientation size may imply variations in cultural patterns across and within regions. Despite the apparent variations in

enclosure size the general similarities across the western part of Britain may reflect similar social groups occupying such structures.

#### *4.3.3. Variation in hillfort form in the Severn-Cotswolds*

Because of the importance placed on 'hillforts' in Iron Age settlement patterning and social organisation in the region (Marshall 1978; Cunliffe 1982; Burrows 1982; 1987; Saville 1984; Darvill 1987) and in southern Britain as a whole (Cunliffe 1991; Hill 1995), the nature of this heterogeneous class of monument in the study area needs to be examined in detail. The problems in defining hillforts as a distinct class of monument on the basis of size and morphology have been discussed above (4.2.6). In order to compare with Jackson's study to the north (which included some of the northern part of the region) 'hillforts' were assessed by size and form to determine the implications of variation.

##### *'Hillfort' chronology*

For many hillforts, dating evidence is extremely limited, and whilst potentially indicating the main periods of activity, cannot provide the detailed and complex histories many of these sites have undoubtedly had (as shown by Danebury and Cadbury Castle). The currency bars recovered from Meon Hill, for example, (Hingley 1989), whilst indicating probably later Iron Age activity do not rule out early occupation, or indicate the nature of later Iron Age activity (they may for instance have been deposited off-site or as Hingley (1990; *forthcoming*) has suggested). Elsewhere, again as the detailed work on Wessex hillforts has shown, some of these sites may have been short-lived. Excavations of hillforts elsewhere, at Maiden Castle (Wheeler 1942; Sharples 1991), Cadbury (Alcock 1972; Barrett *et al* 2000) and Danebury (Cunliffe 1984; 1995) indicate these monuments had long and complex histories of use and were visited and utilised sometimes sporadically over hundreds of years. As suggested for some hillforts in the Marches seasonal occupation (Buckland *et al* 2001) and periods of hiatus and dispersal (Barrett *et al* 2000, 22) may also have been a factor and as such occupation evidence may in some instances be limited. Clearly also many sites went through different uses over their life time.

##### *End of hillforts: evidence of a special role?*

One element of hillforts which supports suggestions that at least some of this class of monument had a special place within wider society is their treatment at the end of occupation. Within the region excavation has shown that the end of hillfort occupation was commonly

dramatic. Evidence of burning of the final phases of hillforts has been noted at many sites, including Crickley (Dixon 1994), Leckhampton and Bury Wood Camp. At some the burning appears to have reached excessively high temperatures and led to the slaking of limestone or sandstone ramparts, for example at Leckhampton (Glos) (Champion 1976), Bury Wood Camp (Grant-King 1961; 1967) and Cherry Hill (Heref.) (Tim Hoverd *pers comm*). Elsewhere final phases of these sites are associated with what have been termed 'massacre' deposits; at Bredon Hill, Cadbury Castle and Sutton Walls although these may in at least some cases be re-interpreted as ritual depositions (see 5.5). Elsewhere, some sites appear to have been abandoned systematically with possible ritual/structured deposits marking the final phase of houses for example, as at Conderton.

In many cases the final abandonment of these sites is marked with what appear to be dramatic events. Interpretation of these may be varied, and relate to specific events at each sites and relates as much to theoretical debates, for example, of whether burning marks a terminal act by the occupants (Bowden and McOmish 1987) or destruction through warfare (Hencken 1938; James *forthcoming*). The burning of many of these sites, with high enough temperatures to slake limestone at Leckhampton and Cherry Hill, must have taken considerable effort and planning, with such fires an undoubtedly impressive sight. This implies the abandoning or destroying of such monuments had significance beyond that of the community occupying them and such an act was intended to be conveyed to the inhabitants of the wider landscape. Evidence of such destruction is harder to identify at smaller enclosures and reinforces the impression, somewhat underplayed in recent years (e.g. Hill 1996), that many hillforts represented distinctive and important monuments within a wider landscape.

#### *Size variation*

A direct association between 'hillfort' size, subsistence regimes and social organisation has long been sought from analysis of hillfort form and distribution and continuous to be so (Forde-Johnson 1976; Jackson 1999a,b). Recently, Jackson (1999a) has suggested a patterning in size of hillforts across the Welsh Marches, which he argues reflects both cultural and subsistence differences in certain areas or zones. The study area is included in at least two of his zones (Fig. 4.3.3.5); Zone 1 which he defines as comprising large hillforts (greater than 6ha) (covering parts of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire and the southern part of Zone 2 comprising smaller to medium sized hillforts in south Wales. Jackson's system reflects with amendments Forde-Johnson's (1976, 11), similar divisions. In order to compare with Jackson and Forde-Johnson size analysis of hillforts was conducted (Fig. 4.3.3.4).

Analysis of ‘hillforts’ size in the region indicates the problematic nature of previous analyses. Firstly it relies on the rather ill-defined definition of hillforts: the overall site database relied partly on previous categorisations but further study shows that what are termed hillforts or enclosures relies on broad, ill-defined definitions of these monuments. Some hillforts in the Welsh Marches are being re-classified as enclosures (*Wigley forthcoming b*) but one might question whether this really furthers our understanding of the functions and roles of these sites. They may, if we see a clear division between the role of enclosures and hillforts, but there remains the possibility that such roles were more fluid between larger enclosures and smaller hillforts. Certainly Jackson’s inclusion of ‘hillforts’ between 0.1-1.2ha, within which size range a substantial number of SRE and curvilinear enclosures in the study area can be placed (see above), yet not including cropmark examples in his analysis, draws an unreal divide between earthwork monuments and cropmarks and in so doing an artificial divide between the role of such sites and similar lowland examples.

*Table. 4.3.3.1: Categories of size defined by Jackson and Forde-Johnson.*

<i>Jackson (1999a)</i>	
Small hillforts	0.1-1.2ha
Medium hillforts	1.3-3ha
Large hillforts	3.1-6ha
V. Large hillforts	6.1ha+
<i>Forde-Johnson (1976)</i>	
Small hillforts	Less than 1ha
Medium hillforts	1-6ha
Large hillforts	6ha+

A second problem is in dividing on the basis of size and equating size with both function and, often implicitly, the nature of the social unit and assessment of hillforts in the region illustrate this problem. Both Forde-Johnson (1976) and Jackson (1999) emphasised the importance of hillforts below 1ha or 1.2ha as representing a different phenomenon or site category. However, a large number of sites in the region termed ‘hillforts’ fit within the small ‘fort’ category. These range in form but can be divided in to broad categories: smaller curvilinear sites; Roel Camp (Glos) (1ha) and Windrush Camp (Glos) (1.21ha), some of which have multivallation, for example, Shenberrow (Glos) (1.01ha), The Bulwarks (Wales) (0.9ha); small promontory camps, such as Edgeworth (0.4ha); irregular and sub-rectilinear earthwork enclosures, particularly those in Wales and the Mendips, such as Castell Prin (Wales) (0.2ha), Trellech-Gaer (0.6ha) and Backwell Camp (N.Som.) (0.1ha) which can almost certainly be regarded as ‘enclosures’ rather than hillforts. Others, like Kings Weston Camp (0.4ha) might best be regarded in form, as well as size, as EIA hilltop enclosures, more in common with similar sites in Wessex (Cunliffe 2000, 153). The important implication of these enclosures is

the size of the communities that occupied them. Further discussion of the nature of household and community form is in Chapter 5, 6 and 8, but such assessments are fundamental in determining the nature of these communities. Unfortunately few sites in this category have been excavated and, where they have, little has been done on the interior although at Windrush it appears, as with Chastleton that there was little occupation inside. For others we may expect communities of perhaps just a handful of households; a marked differences from the huge enclosures of the earliest Iron Age and the large communities of the mid-LIA. In some instance, therefore, both in social form and role, communities at sites like Conderton may not be so removed from lowland enclosures. However, it is dangerous to see this group as homogenous and those excavated indicate a range of dates and potential functions. Already however the direct correlation between size and community can be challenged with many smaller hillforts fitting in to the group of enclosures which Jackson ignores from his analysis but are prevalent in both his Zones 1 and 2.

Further problems arise in drawing conclusions on differences in social organisation when dealing with sites with annexes. A number of such sites exist in the region, most notably at Llanmelin (Wales), Conderton (Worcs) and Welshbury (Glos). Welshbury, for example, although 2.5ha in total extent, the interior of the main enclosure is much less and without excavation it is difficult to establish (but seems unlikely) that the existing plan was conceived in one phase (McOmish and Smith 1996). With such an example it is uncertain both whether the enclosure at one point consisted of a much smaller area (as is certainly the case at Conderton) or whether the annexe was occupied. In many cases this seems unlikely and the community occupying such sites may have been relatively small. At other sites, such as Bredon, the two circuits seems likely represent different phases as Cunliffe (1991, 324), has suggested, although chronologically it seems difficult to be certain of the sequence there is little evidence for EIA activity on the site. The arrangement at Bredon and the 'inner' entrances are particularly unusual however and considering the special deposits (5.8) at the site needs further investigation.

A further problem is that the largest category in both previous analyses (over 6ha) may also conflate a more diverse group of hillforts and in particular sites over 12ha, including Bathampton (32ha), Maes Knoll (12ha), Nottingham (48ha) and Norbury (32ha) may be better regarded as representing a particular group of large hilltop enclosures, regarded as earliest Iron Age (Cunliffe 1991). The equation in Jackson's analysis of such sites with smaller sites such as Midsummer Hill (8.9ha), which seem likely to have very different functions, role and meaning within the community, is problematic. Even within a larger group, however, size distinctions can be deceptive with Credenhill (20ha) seemingly only

occupied in the MIA and Uley Bury (15ha) apparently packed with smaller enclosures and structures of probably middle to LIA date (see Fig 5.4.1).

Overall, size analysis in the region suggests size categories are not clear-cut. However, as with other enclosure forms, there appears to be a slight disparity between north and south, with a tendency towards more hillforts in the medium and large categories than to the south (Fig 4.3.3.4), corroborating, in part, Jackson's pattern from the Marches. On closer inspection, there appear to be larger numbers of smaller hillfort enclosures in North Somerset, along the Mendips and in south Gloucestershire. The reasons for this are unclear but may relate both to nomenclature problems as discussed above (with many upstanding earthwork enclosures defined as hillforts rather than enclosures) although the possibility of social differences, as suggested by Jackson, cannot be completely dismissed.

### *Entrance orientation*

Examination of hillfort entrances in the Severn-Cotswolds suggests subtle differences from both the Welsh Marches (Jackson 1999b) and Wessex (Hill 1995). Overall in the region a preference can be noted toward easterly facing entrances (Fig. 4.3.3.1) with significant numbers facing non-east directions although Fig. 4.3.3.2 suggests this is dominated by multiple entrance sites. Such sites may represent early forms of some enclosures with later phase having blocked up entrances (as seen at Salmonsbury and Conderton) as consciousness over entrance orientation appears to have become more important over the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC, reflecting the sequence suggested for example at Danebury (Cunliffe 1995).

The impression from smaller enclosures and settlement form is of greater diversity in the south of the study area than in the north. Examination of hillfort entrances between north and south (Fig. 4.3.3.3) suggests, in the main, relatively similar patterns but a notable tendency towards non-easterly entrances in the south. To what extent this is related to factors such as chronological differences in sites (with possibly fewer east entrances on earlier sites, as suggested above) or reflects real cultural divergence between these areas still remains debatable. However it adds to a growing impression of varying localised cultural patterns in the study area in aspects such as entrance orientation, suggesting that many recent discussions of such patterns may have been too generalised (e.g. Oswald 1997) and ignore local variations which reflect different communities perceptions of space and the reworking of broader cosmological rules and traditions. This is supported by comparison with data from southern England (Fig. 4.3.3.1), which suggests, although there are broad similarities, greater diversity is evident in the region than in Wessex.

## *Conclusions*

Closer analysis of the date and form of hillforts in the region suggests a far greater diversity than Jackson's model implies. Drawing conclusion on variation in size as representing differences in social organisation and form between larger regions suffers from a range of problems both methodological and theoretical. Defining hillforts as a distinct category has been shown to be fraught with problems and, even once achieved, defining distinct groups on the basis of size or indeed other elements, such as vallation, inevitably leads to the conflation of a variety of sites, varying in role, form and date into meaningless groups. Ignoring the chronological element, as done by Jackson (1999) and treating hillfort form as a static entity within geographical areas, masks the apparent changes in hillfort form and architecture over the Iron Age which themselves may reflect wider social changes (see Chapter 5). In addition it masks more diversity within chronological periods; between for example small, promontory forts like Crickley and large hilltop enclosures like Norbury.<sup>30</sup> With these problems in mind some broad patterns do emerge, however, particularly in potential differences in form between the north and south, both in size of hillforts and in entrance orientation. When compared with the claimed variation in other forms of settlement and landscape history (see below) such differences may take on greater significance, further supporting the idea of somewhat different attitudes towards space, social organisation and inter-community relationships between these two areas.

Some broad chronological and morphological groups can be suggested within the category.<sup>31</sup> Isolating the earliest hilltop enclosures as a discreet group (Wainwright 1967; Cunliffe 1991) appears accurate but further investigation is needed to ascertain the extent of occupation and whether at least some of the rectangular buildings on these sites can be argued as domestic (Moore 2003) and what roles they performed; as seasonal meeting places or storage centres for more dispersed communities. Within the largest group of hillforts it may also be able to see later Iron Age sites like Uley Bury as representing hillfort communities more akin to Salmonsbury and Dyke Hills, and further afield Hod Hill, with large areas occupied by circular structures, some of which were in separate enclosures. Within the group hillforts, therefore, whilst smaller examples may be regarded as social and symbolically quite similar to larger versions of enclosures, others clearly performed distinct roles within the wider community.

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<sup>30</sup> Although the chronologies are vague enough that even these may not have been contemporary.

<sup>31</sup> With more detailed discussion in Chapter 5.

#### 4.3.4. Site density

Any discussion of site density is fraught with difficulty related both to variation in preservation in the archaeological record and issues over the contemporaneity of features and sites. However, broad assessments of site density from cropmark sites may highlight denser areas of settlements and it might be argued that as fieldwork levels and flying coverage increases disparity in site densities across the region (and southern Britain as a whole) may become apparent.

Assessment of Area 1 indicates a site density of roughly 1 site per 3-4km sq. This figure is likely to be seriously under-representative of site density for the region and particularly to under represents site numbers in the west of the study area in the wooded and pasture areas of the Cotswold scarp and Severn vale<sup>32</sup>. Accepting that not all sites are contemporary the underestimation of site numbers for parts of the region may imply a figure closer to 1 site per 2-3kmsq. Such a figure would match surveys elsewhere for settlement density in the Iron Age (Moore *forthcoming c*). Site density in Area 2 of 1 site per 14sq km is much lower but reflects variation in cropmark formation and landscape (the presence of the Fens, pasture etc) rather than a real difference in levels of occupation. Cluster of sites can be seen in certain areas; for example along the Polden Hills to the south, which is being added to by field work in the Shapwick environs (Chris Gerrard *pers comm*) and on the ridge close to Somerton further south (cf. Leech 1978) indicating that certain areas were more densely settled. The evidence of a range of settlements in the Levels themselves, at Alstone and Hallen to the north, for example, as well as the Lake Villages suggests that most areas of the landscape were intensively utilized.

The Bredon Hill Environs indicates the kind of density of settlement that is coming to light in the Severn and (North) Avon valleys. When finds of Iron Age pottery (mainly later Iron Age) from field walking are included alongside cropmark enclosures site density in the Bredon area suggests a density of roughly one site per 2sq km. Fig.6.1.1.1, however, reveals the complexity obscured by this figure. In many areas site density is far higher whilst even in this area of a high density of cropmarks some areas appear relatively sparse of settlement. It seems likely that further exploration will reveal additional sites in these areas to increase the density, however, it is probable that the clustering apparent may be a real reflection of Iron Age (and possibly Romano-British) settlement foci, potentially focused on the fan gravels (Fig.

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<sup>32</sup> It should also be noted that not all stray finds and fieldwalked material has been included in this figure. In many cases such evidence may point toward occupation sites and further raise the density figure.

4.4.2.3/6.1.1.1) with some areas of the landscape (particularly on the higher ground) less densely settled. This pattern in the Bredon area reflects the density of settlement observed in recent years in the Warwickshire Avon (Hingley 1989; 1996), but appears at odds with the lower Severn.

The extent to which areas of increased or limited density of sites reflect real past variations is more problematic. As will be discussed later, the assumption that all of southern Britain was densely settled in the later Iron Age may be questioned and areas of more favourable soils must surely have been more densely settled. If this is true areas of limited site density may indeed reflect areas of less occupation in the past. General observation of the distribution of sites in the study area indicates a number of patterns. Recorded sites cluster on the Cotswolds and in the upper Thames valley compared to a relative paucity in the lower Severn valley. This due mainly to differences in modern land use and the nature of soils in the valley with well-drained gravels in the upper Thames Valley compared to more clayey soils in the lower Severn valley and problems of alluvium obscuring sites from Gloucester southwards. An additional lack of gravel extraction (and subsequent archaeological investigation) may also be a factor. The number of unenclosed sites in this area may also be a factor in the lack of sites detected, although if the case it would still suggest a somewhat different settlement form to that in the Bredon environs.

#### ***4.3.5. Regional and inter-regional differences in settlement form***

Analysis of the cropmark data, allied with earthwork and excavated sites, allows for a relatively detailed discussion of the variation in settlement form across the study area. The distribution of site types was studied using the morphological categories outlined above. Despite the problems using morphological categories, if there is a relationship between settlement form and perception of space and social organisation, then variation in settlement form may shed light on the variation or similarity of the nature of community and inter-community organisation across the region. In addition, settlement form may relate to differences in subsistence patterns and agricultural regimes.

Certain areas of the region, as discussed above, provide higher quality information on the nature of settlement form; particularly the Cotswolds and upper Thames valley because of the wealth of cropmark data. To this area can be added the lower Severn and north Avon rivers. As such these areas potentially provide a far larger corpus to allow an understanding of the nature of settlement form in those areas but also hint at the variation and complexity even in

smaller topographic and regional locations. However, evidence from other areas of the region with smaller corpuses may also provide some comparison for settlement form over a wider area.

Smaller areas of the region of 100 km sq. were taken to assess sites form variability across the study area enabling a closer examination of the relationships between settlement form and landscape<sup>33</sup> (Fig. 4.3.5.1). These comprised of the following areas that were chosen to represent significant different landscapes within the intense study areas in order to test real differences in site types. To these can be compared the larger (360 km sq) intensively studied area around Bredon Hill.

*Table 4.3.5.1. Smaller samples areas used in assessment of variation of settlement form (Fig. 4.3.5.1)*

Area A	Upper Thames Valley
Area B	Upper Thames and Churn Valley
Area C	Bagendon Environs
Area D	Cotswolds plateau / dip slope
Area E	Northern Cotswold uplands
Area F	Lower Severn Valley
Area G	Western Cotswold plateau
Area H	Mendip Hills
Area I	Mendip Hills
Area J	Mendip Hills
Area K	East Somerset

These sample areas simplify complex distributions of site types but reflect broader variations in settlement form. The sample areas identify a number of variations in settlement form (Fig. 4.3.5.2/3/4/5) and can be compared to the overall picture in Area I (Fig. 4.3.5.6). In area A, and to some extent B, open settlements dominate reaffirming the theory that open settlement is related significantly to low-lying locations and the upper Thames valley in particular. The dominance of open settlement (shown in area F) in the lower Severn valley is even more marked and may be even greater considering that much of the 'uncertain' evidence for settlements, such as that at Barnwood (Clifford 1930) and Saintbridge (Darvill and Timby 1986), are likely to represent unenclosed settlements, although the greater body of work done on the Bredon Environs appears to suggest that elsewhere in the Severn valley SRE enclosure variants dominated. The dominance of SRE and rectilinear enclosures is indicated in all the survey areas but the much greater proportion in the upper Cotswolds may be significant and

<sup>33</sup> To these were added stray find evidence as well as excavated, cropmark and survey data.

reflects a general impression that settlement had a greater tendency to rectilinear enclosure in that area.

There is not, however, a direct relationship between unenclosed settlement and the main river valleys and the impression from Area F in particular may be misleading<sup>34</sup>. The Severn valley, particularly the area around Bredon Hill along the Carrant brook and Avon valley suggest that enclosed communities were common, and within the Bredon Hill Environs (Fig. 4.3.5.7) the area is dominated by SRE enclosures, making up 58% of the sites. This is in addition to the enclosed communities further south at Frocester and what may be Iron Age enclosures at Longford. This reflects the situation noted from cropmark evidence further up the Avon and Severn Valleys of enclosed communities on the gravel terraces (Hingley 1989; 1996; Whimster 1989). In addition, in many cases the definition of some of the more amorphous settlements in these valleys, sites such as Stanway, Beckford (Britnell) and Evesham, have elements of enclosures in wider spreads of settlement and whilst having some similarities with unenclosed communities in the Thames valley cannot be defined as such. The picture then is far more complex than Hingley's dichotomy for the upper Thames and Cotswolds implies and suggests that such a patterning is less relevant for the Severn and Avon valleys and that there is no direct relationship between topographic location and settlement form

Another distinction in settlement form, not so apparent from the surveyed area, but more apparent when the region to the north is compared, is a higher proportion of bi and multivallate enclosures in the Severn and Avon Valleys, making up 16% of the total sites in the Bredon Hill Environs (Fig. 4.3.5.7). Examples, in addition to the late phase at Frocester, occur at Kempsey (Fig. 6.1.2.5.), to the south of Evesham (SP031415), Wyre piddle (Fig.4.2.1.1b) and Broadway (Fig. 6.1.2.5). As such, they seem far more common than on the Cotswolds and match a greater preference for multivallation seen in the upper Severn (Whimster 1989). It is difficult to establish why this should be the case, although if the phasing of Frocester is correct then multivallation may be acquired over time, potentially as a result of gaining status or to define the community more overtly (see chapter 5). The regional variation in multi-vallation however, also seen with larger numbers in parts of Wales (e.g. Driver 1995) and the Welsh Marches (Whimster 1989; Wigley *forthcoming b*) must surely argue against a simple equation between vallation and status, as argued for some in the Welsh Marches (e.g. Wigley *forthcoming b*) but partly reflect local cultural phenomena; perhaps more complex inter groups relationships and need to define the household enclosure.

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<sup>34</sup> Perhaps reinforced by the unusually high proportion of 'uncertain' settlement/activity elements.

Area D indicates the impression that banjo enclosures have a tendency to be situated on the Cotswold Dip slope. Banjo enclosures tend to be situated below the 200m contour and above the 100m contour situated on the plateau of limestone extending the distribution from the Oxfordshire Cotswolds. Although there are exceptions to this pattern at Ashton Keynes in the valley and two sites above 200m, the pattern suggests some relationship between the landscape and banjo location. The pattern reflects that in north Oxfordshire (Featherstone and Bewley 2000) where banjos are predominantly situated on the free draining limestone. This might imply that the functional explanation of banjo may be significant and that they were best suited to certain parts of the landscape. The few banjos noted in the southern part of the study area reflect this location situated on the limestone plateau but within reach of better watered valley locations (cf. Hingley 1984a). On a wider scale banjos can be seen to be restricted to the dip slope, located on the interface between the Thames valley and upper Cotswolds (Fig.6.1.4.4). The potential chronological and cultural reasons for this are discussed in chapter 6, but they may also relate to economic role of these settlements accessing two landscapes.

The prevalence of 'unenclosed' sites in the valleys has been widely discussed (Hingley 1984a) relying on explanations of regional social and/or subsistence differences. It is difficult to determine whether the absence of 'unenclosed' settlements from the Cotswolds uplands reflects a cultural phenomenon or relates to variation in cropmark visibility. The latter seems unlikely and although more unenclosed sites probably await detection on the Cotswolds the broad pattern remains. The chronological factor is important in that a number of unenclosed sites on the uplands may be early and of a different nature to those in the Thames valley.

The settlement patterns in the northern part of the study area appear to contrast with those in the Somerset Levels and Mendips. This may partly be the result of variation in the quantity and quality of settlement form data from the southern region, with far less cropmark data available and majority of sites known through excavation or preservation as earthworks. That said, such differences cannot fully explain the differences in settlement form between these areas (Fig. 4.3.5.4/5). Although here the data is far less detailed, within areas H, I and K the dominance of rectilinear enclosures does not appear so overwhelming and, in contrast, excavation in the area has shown a variety of unenclosed sites as at Chew Park and Butcombe. The Mendip topography, although not identical, is broadly similar to the Cotswolds and the differences may reflect regional cultural differences in the nature of settlement form rather than a functional one. The four sample areas clearly highlight the diversity of settlement form in this area. SREs form the significant element of settlement on the eastern Mendips in Area J, whilst prominence of curvilinear, 'hillforts', open sites and

cave sites is highlighted in areas K and I. Despite the limited data from Area 2 compared to Area 1, it appears to highlight a greater diversity in form of settlement both between Area 2 and Area 1 and also within Area 2 itself.

### *Discussion*

The variability in site types within and between regions raises a number of issues over the relationship between settlement form and both the functional and symbolic roles of settlements. Accepting that the functional, social and symbolic aspects are unlikely to be divorced in terms of settlement form we need to address what differences between regions may mean in determining differences in agricultural practices and social structure. It is difficult to see over-riding associations between topography; such as valley or uplands and the form of settlements. Concepts of unenclosed in the valley locations and enclosed on the uplands appear to have meaning only in the Upper Thames Valley which may relate either to specific patterns of social organisation (Hingley 1984a, b), subsistence regimes or settlements traditions. Although even here, and in the other valleys, the danger in drawing discreet definition between enclosed and unenclosed can be highlighted and as such in associating them with particular systems of social organisation (see Ch. 5).

McOmish (2001) has recently argued that a similarity in settlement form across regions undermines the importance placed on regionalism in recent studies of the Iron Age. McOmish's observations have merit in noting that, despite regional and inter-regional differences in enclosure form, large similarities in form and size in enclosure do occur across large areas of Britain. The existence of similar Banjo complexes across the East Cotswolds, Dorset and Hampshire, for example, may imply similar roles for these sites. The existence of enclosures sharing some of these characteristics as far away as the Somme valley (Roymans 1990) may imply these similarities were even more widespread.

Similarly, the prevalence of (sub) rectangular enclosure throughout Iron Age Britain may also be a related phenomenon. Although one might argue that the SRE form reflects a simple 'common denominator' the preference for sub-rectangular enclosures across wide areas of Britain may actually indicate a wider importance in the move towards smallish enclosures occupied by perhaps an extended family group (see Ch. 5 and 6). The social implications for this trend in certain areas (and the lack of a move elsewhere) has been generally underplayed since Hingley's work in 1984<sup>35</sup>. In addition, similarity in the specific form of many sub-

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<sup>35</sup> Although see Hill (1999)

rectilinear enclosures, such as the existence of smaller inner enclosures, seen at a number of sites in the north (see Chapter 5), may suggest similar concepts in the settlement construction.

Accepting these similarities, there are obvious divisions in settlement form across the study area. Within such broad patterns the variability within morphological forms should not be underplayed (e.g. Haselgrove 2001, fig 3.7) as well as the importance of multivallation on certain sites. Whilst some similarities may exist, each enclosure has been constructed in response to the individual needs and cultural affinities of each group. This analysis shows that settlement form changes markedly across regions. Although broad site types do occur in all the survey areas, such as SRE enclosures, particular areas of the landscape favour certain types of settlement. For example, the apparent (but as yet not entirely clear) greater preference for unenclosed in the south of the region may imply the choice of enclosures on the Cotswolds is not entirely related to agricultural influences and is, as Hingley suggested, partly cultural. The dominance of SRE in the north Avon valley (cf. Hingley 1989) also indicates that settlement form does not directly relate to subsistence patterns. However, the dominance of unenclosed settlements in the mayor valley systems including possibly other parts of the Severn valley and the upper Thames, may imply that unenclosed settlements were related to particular landscape uses, for instance transhumance. It might be that a preference for arable farming amongst some unenclosed settlements might mitigate against the need for well defined enclosing of the wider settlement. Those settlements involved in a more pastoral economy may need to keep the stock out of the main habitation area. The evidence of single silos at the north Cotswold enclosures could indicate less emphasis on arable and hence the need to keep stock away from the main habitation area? Further examination of the economies of these sites is required, although if anything initial work suggest the above explanation is unlikely and does not reflect the difference between these economies

#### **4.4. Site location and land use**

##### **4.4.1. Site location**

A number of observations can be made on site location. Many of the enclosures are situated in close proximity to the main valley systems that break up the Cotswold plateau. This can be seen notably along both the Frome and upper Windrush valleys and includes the excavated site at Bowsings, which occupies a small promontory above the valley. There may be a number of reasons for such locations, including defence or, more likely, they indicate the accessing of two resource areas by these settlements. This is supported by the analysis of soil type exploitation, which indicates most of these sites had access to both the limestone soils

and the better pasture of the clay soils. This may indicate that these settlements were involved in a mixed economy; using the valleys for pastoral and plateau for arable. It could also support the idea that a large extent of the upper Cotswold plateau may have been wooded, as suggested by Mudd (1999).

Analysis of the sites by height in Area 1, supports many of the observations noted in section 4.3.5 (Fig. 4.4.1.1/2). Banjo enclosures cluster between the 140-200m OD possibly indicating their location on the edge of the Cotswold plateau, perhaps suggesting their role in accessing two landscapes; the upper plateau and the more low lying valleys. Polygonal and irregular enclosures show a range of locations and the lack of sites below 80 metres is interesting. Unenclosed sites differ from all other groups, predominating in low-lying locations supporting the observations above that they cluster in the Severn and Thames valleys.

Large enclosures clearly tend to be in upland location reflecting their hillfort status. The lack of many other sites of any type at heights above around 260m may reflect the exceptional role of these sites argued for above; perhaps indicating a distinction from other settlements and perhaps situated in areas of less favourable settlement location. Although the Cotswolds are not as exposed as some sites in the Welsh Marches or Pennines, a number of locations were likely to be relatively inhospitable and may indicate the possibility of seasonality at some sites as suggested for some hillforts in the Welsh Marches (e.g. Buckland *et al* 2001). The evidence from SRE enclosures supports the observation that they are found throughout the landscapes. They tend towards between 80-100m indicating a prevalence of these sites on the Cotswold dip slope. A preference for the higher uplands between 240-260m is also notable and reflects the dominance of SRE sites on the upper Cotswolds.

The topographic location of sites may have important implication for the relationship between site morphology and agricultural function. A functional relationship to site form is unfashionable but the prevalence of certain site types in some locations may reflect their favouring of particular soils or landscapes. It may also reflect other aspects over the choice of sites location related to possible factors such as status. The influence of agricultural process on site morphology has been undermined in favour of cosmological and cultural influences.

The relation of sites to the local micro-topography may also have been important. Often such observations may be missed from studies related to map based study of cropmarks where important use of the micro-topography may be too small scale to be observable on maps. We should accept that if micro-topography was important in low-lying locations (e.g. Taylor 1999) it may also have been important elsewhere. One instance may be the location of

enclosures on promontories above river valleys, as mentioned above and seen at sites such as The Bowsings. It is difficult to establish to what extent this represents a functional positioning or related to defence of symbolic, perhaps a combination of these. The location of enclosures on small promontories has been noted elsewhere, in Teesdale for instance (Moore *forthcoming c*), and requires further study.

#### ***4.4.2 Relationship of Iron Age sites to soil types***

One potential way of assessing the relationship between site form and subsistence regimes may be in assessing the relationship between site type and soil types. A number of surveys of cropmark sites have studied the relation of sites to soil types elsewhere (Bewley 1994; Jackson 1999a, b) and a limited study has been undertaken on some sites in the region (Moore 1999). A number of these surveys have sought to use modern soil classifications to assess the relationship between sites and the productivity of soils in order to explore the relationship between Iron Age site location and choices in soil type to determine the nature of subsistence of such settlements. Such studies are an attempt to move beyond the severely limited environmental evidence available from the region (cf. Stevens 1996; Hambleton 1998) and use soil and site location as possibilities of modes of subsistence.

#### ***Soil classification***

There are a number of problems with a simplistic approach towards analysis of settlement and soil type. Catchment analyses contain varied assumptions on site roles and the land sites were able to utilise and the distances communities will go to access landscape resources. The approach taken by a number of studies (including Bewley 1994) in examining what soils sites are situated on, although useful is flawed in a simplistic approach to the soils and landscapes that sites may have been able to access. For examples, whilst a site may exist on upland limestone soil (as many sites in the study area appear to) they may also have had access to better soils in near by valleys. For this reason the site catchment analysis was undertaken. Similar studies have been undertaken elsewhere- most notably by Jackson (1999a) for the Welsh Marches. The problem with such analyses is in determining a cut off point. Jackson claims a distances of 3km as representing an ethnographic example of landscape use and this has been used in this study. Using simple zones, however, is hindered by not incorporating factors as slope and access variations that may exist within the catchment zone. In addition such studies do not sufficiently incorporate the possible complexities of landuse, such as transhumance or seasonal occupation which sites such as Farmoor (Lambrick and Robinson 1979) have suggested were operating in at least parts of the Thames Valley. In addition we

need to be aware that all sites may not have been permanent settlements and therefore may not have needed to access resources all year round, alternatively some may not have been 'settlements' at all. Recent research on some hillforts (e.g. Buckland *et al* 2001) in particular, indicates this may have been the case with some of the larger upland enclosures. For these reasons they can only be regarded as illustrative and hypothetical indications of the possibilities for settlement economies.

## ***Results***

Fig. 4.4.2.1 indicates the types of soil sites different settlement forms were situated on for Area 1. This used MAFF (1983) soil classifications, which were simplified to create a clearer, more generalised picture. In Area 1, the clayey soils are located in the valleys and, although heavier, are often relatively productive and provide good grassland for cattle. The alluvial soils, although often waterlogged in wetter months and prone to flooding, provide excellent pasture for horse and cattle. The shallow, upland limestone soils are good for cereal crops and rough grazing for sheep but are (usually) too dry for cattle pasture. A number of patterns are immediately apparent. Banjo enclosures (Fig. 4.4.2.2), as noted above, do seem to be related to the limestone soils of the Cotswolds and may imply some particular agricultural subsistence. It is notable, however, that a number have access to low-lying alluvial soils and further supports the suggestion that they are situated to access two landscapes and had a role in stock husbandry. The location of hillforts on limestone soils is unsurprising, considering their upland location on the Cotswolds, however, large numbers were able to access a wide array of low land clay and alluvial soils. This may suggest that communities in hillforts consciously maintained access to varied soil types and this may support the suggestion that they were not just consumer sites but accessed varied resources. The location of unenclosed sites suggests that whilst situated in the lowland they were usually located in the gravel terraces but almost all within access of the waterlogged pasture of the alluvial areas. This reflects the potential for dynamic and seasonal settlements, like that seen at Farmoor, discussed above, and related to more permanent settlements on the gravel terraces. Such seasonal settlements are unlikely to be detected through cropmarks and further work is required (particularly in the Severn Valley) to detect such settlements.

The possibility of seasonal or transhumant use of other areas of the region, such as parts of the uplands is also seldom considered. To what extent for example may parts of the upper Cotswolds or Bredon Hill for example been used for upland grazing yet been lightly or only seasonally occupied. Discussion over the potential sporadic or seasonal use of hillforts have suggested similar possibilities and whilst in the region the differences in altitude do not match

those in the Welsh Marches for instance, the possibility that such areas may have been farmed from lowland settlements and even major features such as hillforts only visited sporadically or at certain times of year requires further analysis. Work by Stevens (1996) has suggested that some enclosures on the Cotswolds may have been exchanging crops with lowland settlements and/or co-operating with other settlements in crop processing and production (see Chapter 7). Complex systems of exchange and co-operation may have been taking place therefore meaning simple correlations between site location and subsistence mask far more complex agricultural and economic regimes.

Sites in the Severn valley appear to concentrate on the gravel islands rather than the more widespread clay soils. Comparison of the fan gravels (Fig. 4.4.2.3) with location of cropmarks in the Bredon Environs (Fig. 6.1.1.1) suggests a direct link between the two. This may be a result of higher visibility on the gravels, however, and recent work to the south of the fan gravels has shown Iron Age activity off the gravel terraces (Fig. 6.1.1.1; Coleman *et al* 2003; Coleman and Hancock's *forthcoming*) In the Gloucester area, preference for the gravel terraces also appears true and can be seen at Frocester (Price 2000) Saintbridge (Darvill and Timby 1986), Hucclecote (Thomas *et al* 2003) and Barnwood (Clifford 1933). These sites do not relate to detection through cropmarks but chance excavation, possibly indicating that gravel islands were favoured for the slightly drier ground and easily tilled soil. There is some suggestion that gravel terraces were probably foci in LBA and EIA with evidence from sites such as Tewkesbury (Walker *et al* 1997) suggesting a lack of occupation on the clays. One of the odd patterns is the location of curvilinear sites on gravels, somewhat more than might be expected and raising possibilities about their function and relation to particular subsistence regimes which may be worth investigating further in the future.

#### **4.5. Conclusions on morphological analysis**

Despite the problems inherent in defining and discussing morphological groups from excavated and cropmark sites by creating broad categories, which rely as much on function and role as pure morphology, differences between and within regions can be discerned. If we accept that settlement form reflects social organisation, perception of space and of each other then variation noted above may indicate varying social organisation and landscape histories. Initial assessment appears to suggest some broad differences between the northern and southern parts of the study area. More surprising perhaps is the variation within more localised areas such as between the Cotswolds and the Bredon Hill environs.

The differences between the Upper Thames and lower Severn, despite some broad similarities in landscape and topography, appear to illustrate the localised nature of settlement form and potential differences in social organisation. If anything the nature of settlement organisation in the Bredon area suggests more similarities with the rest of the Severn Valley (Whimster 1989) and to some extent the Cotswolds than with other low-lying areas, like the Thames Valley. Undoubtedly within the Severn valley, the move to bounding communities (probably of extended household size) was important. However, as shown in Chapter 6, in many instances such enclosures were situated within a wider group of potentially contemporary enclosures possibly forming wider communities.

Another pattern is the apparent differences between the north and south of the region. Comparison between these areas is constrained by variation in the quantity and quality of data, but a number of points emerge which may be important in identifying different landscape histories of these regions. The apparent greater preponderance of unenclosed settlement in the south and diversity in settlement form is seemingly matched by excavated evidence elsewhere (see Ch. 6) and suggests different landscape histories and perhaps social relations between communities. Considering the differences in material culture previously noted between these areas (Cunliffe 1982, 1991) and suggested socio-political divide, differences in settlement form may reflect wider differences in social organisation. The dominance, particularly of sub-rectilinear and other similar enclosures on the Cotswolds and lower Severn valley, suggests an emphasis on enclosing small household sized units. Although the contrast Hingley (1984a) noted, between enclosed and unenclosed communities in the Thames Valley, remains valid the nature of many of those so called unenclosed settlements, often comprising smaller enclosures amongst them, as at Claydon Pike, Lechlade and Stanway-Hailes (in the Severn Valley), may suggest also a desire for 'enclosure' in some instances but within a different form and context to that of the enclosures elsewhere (see Ch. 5). In contrast, the unenclosed settlements at Chew Park, for example, may mark something different with less desire for definition of the household community or its expression through other means. However, examination of settlement form indicates variation within even relatively small areas of the region, which may relate to local subsistence regimes, cultural traditions and landscape histories. It suggests we need to be careful in drawing too much from broad patterns which mask local variation.

Other patterns that emerge from this analysis which may be pertinent in understanding landscape histories include the limited number of banjo enclosures from both the south and west of the study area. Although again variation in the data may well be a factor, the limited numbers in the south does seem real and many of the claimed examples in Avon area appear

somewhat dubious. There also appears little evidence for this monument type in Herefordshire or in the lower Severn and Avon valleys and as such their main focus appears to be restricted to the southern and eastern Cotswolds with further examples beyond the region in Wiltshire, Dorset and Hampshire (Fasham 1987; Corney 1989; Barrett *et al* 1991; Haselgrove 1994). The role and nature of these sites therefore and their restricted distribution and role within wider landscape histories requires further examination (Ch.6).



## **Chapter 5**

### **Household and community**

“Settlement evidence encodes information on the social organisation of space”  
(Hingley 1984a, 75).

The understanding of space and landscape is conducted and reproduced by communities at varying levels, reflecting different levels of social and community organisation. Such levels of social organisation are not mutually exclusive each interacting and reacting. Thus, whilst individuals experience space on the local, ‘settlement’ level, society may express it through regional forms. These broader patterns (discussed in Chapter 6) are part of, and made up, of the small scale; the individual and communities, with society constructed and conducted at varying levels including the individual, the family, household, kin, clan, wider community, tribe and polity. These are interactive, cutting across perceptions of space and social organisation. In order to understand the nature of societies and their perceptions of space and community each of these levels needs to be examined. This division (apparent between chapters 4 and 5) is somewhat arbitrary, with social organisation and relations fluid between these spheres rather than distinct. It is the combining of the organisation found on the site level with that seen in regional patterns and how these levels interact which is one of the crucial questions in attempting to reconstruct how such societies worked and were organised. This section assess the nature of settlement form on the small scale interrogating whether broader variations in site form noted in chapter 4 reflect differences in attitudes towards social space, the size and potentially form of community across the region.

Relating social analysis and settlement form have a long tradition in Iron Age studies in the region since Clarke’s (1972) watershed paper on the social make up of Glastonbury and Hingley’s (1984a, b) discussion of social organisation in the upper Thames valley. Despite this, in recent years the focus on cosmology as an interpretive tool in intra (and inter) site analysis has made the study of the social make up of Iron Age communities on all levels deeply unfashionable, as post-processual archaeologists have sought to shift the focus away from what they have regarded as social modeling with a shift to relativism and cosmology.

The multi-scalar analysis of settlement in this study underlines the need to explain the social construction of those settlements and the landscape. Analysis of the cropmark data has formed one basis for such a social analysis. However, the problems in dating and lack of detail make further analysis difficult. In particular, a false impression of homogeneity may be gained from the cropmark data and the differences between settlement layout and site history less apparent. For these reasons this chapter focuses primarily on excavated examples, assessing how settlements are structured and organised; interrogating the construction of space within the settlement in an attempt to elucidate both the nature of the social groups and their attitudes towards space and landscape.

This section will also examine deposition practices of human remains across the region. Recent studies (Cunliffe 1992; Hill 1995) have shown the deposition of material culture on Iron Age sites is often structured rather than purely 'accidental'. Consequently, the location of certain artefacts, the extent of deposition, its form, the nature of the deposition of human remains and so on, are all potentially related to communities perceptions of space and the world. In this view the cosmological references of such practices are not separated from their social meaning and role within constructing the communities identity and reinforcing social relations. Whilst they may be bound up with ritual or cosmological beliefs these are likely to be related to the communities perceptions of the world. The extent to which such practices are homogenous or varied throughout the region (and southern Britain) has important implications for the nature of community organisation and social relations between societies.

### **5. 1 Reconstructing Iron Age societies from settlement form and layout**

The studies by Clarke and Hingley, mentioned above, continue to be two of the most influential attempts at constructing communities from settlement form and layout. A central achievement was regarding the organisation of space on settlement as fundamental in reflecting how Iron Age communities perceived each other and the world around them. Since these works, however, social theory has suggested the relationship between social organisation and settlement space may be complex (e.g. Moore 1986; Grøn 1991) and there are a number of factors we need to consider. Firstly the theoretical implications; to what extent does settlement form reflect community organisation? Most importantly, to what extent will social models based on settlement form create a static, unchanging picture of society? Secondly, the methodological problems need close scrutiny. Clarke's model of Glastonbury has been shown to be based on unsound use of the evidence, particularly a simplistic association between *in situ* remains and working/living areas (Barrett 1987; Coles and Minnit

1995). Are we, therefore, in danger in of creating false models based on homogenising phases and can we ever create a meaningful picture of how settlements were organized?

### *5.1.1 Past Approaches to social organisation: the household*

The first discussion of the ‘Britons’ of the region implicitly included discussion of the social organisation of communities in the region. These tended to view Iron Age society as essentially warlike and patriarchal. This picture was physically embodied in the drawings of Glastonbury by Forestier in the Illustrated London news in 1911 (Coles and Minnit 1995, 14). Until the 1960s these approaches relied heavily on classical accounts of later Iron Age society (O’Neill and O’Neill 1952; Clifford 1961; Cunliffe 1982) and focused on societies as essentially warlike farmers. A patrilineal mode of society was often implied with male warriors as the head of both households and communities. The potential irony of the rich female burial at Birdlip, discovered in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Staelens 1982), in contrast to the limited evidence for rich male burials appears to have been missed.

Although the household has been regarded as an essential element of Iron Age social models since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we know very little of its nature. Many studies have turned to classical sources yet these are potentially flawed in regarding households of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD Germany, in Tacitus, 1<sup>st</sup> century BC Gaul, in Caesar, or of early medieval Ireland as transposable to 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC Britain; in seeing the household of the Celtic world as a uniform entity. The two influential analyses of social organisation in the region take contrasting approaches. Hingley (1984a, b) assessed social organisation from examination of broad differences in settlement form whilst Clarke (1972) assessed a single site; Glastonbury. Clarke’s model emphasised the importance of the construction of the site based on modular units based around a household group or more explicitly “patrilocal extended families of non-noble freemen farmers, united by kinship ties” (Fig. 5.1.1.1). The ‘household’ as a building block of society is emphasised and defined as a patriarchal unit related to other groups on kinship terms presumably based on genetic relations. These modules formed what Clarke perceived as:

“..internally networked co-operative social units, ancestrally linked to the unit houses”.

(1972, 827)

This module, to an extent, reflects that perceived for the nature of enclosure social groups by Hingley (1984) as kin-related, single household units. Clarke went on to indicate how these

modules made up the space of the settlement and that the nature of the settlement of Glastonbury consisted of a multiple of these individual units. Clarke's model emphasised the role of the household as a unit in the construction of Iron Age social organisation and directly reflected the construction of the space of the settlement. As reconstructed, however, these units had little basis in the archaeological record (Coles and Minnit 1995). In addition, they incorporated a variety of questionable assumptions about gender roles and kin relations. These include women undertaking work separated from men, men as high status in the household and that lineage was based on patriarchy. Such assumptions perhaps owe more to pre-conceived notions of a 'Celtic' society that had existed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century than an accurate reading of the archaeology (Barrett 1987; Coles and Minnit 1995). There is a further danger in using Glastonbury as a model for wider Iron Age society. It has become increasingly apparent that in location, form and activities the Lake Villages were exceptional elements of society, and probably represent distinct forms of community, and are thus unlikely to be representative of social forms elsewhere.

Hingley's work sought to examine regionalized models of Iron Age societies based on settlement form (1984a, b). Hingley's models (Fig. 5.1.1.2/3) accepted that social organisation was not monolithic but varied regionally across southern Britain and that social organisation could be discerned through variation in settlement form. Hingley's thesis proposes a picture of the 'household' or kin group as a distinct entity. Analysis on the broad scale of settlement organisation in the region and beyond indicating clustering of enclosures (Chapter 4 and 6), alongside material culture evidence (Chapter 7) suggests the concept of isolated/independent communities, either on an agricultural basis, or on a social basis, is flawed. Variation in settlement form across the study area also indicates that more diverse and complex models are needed for the region.

Throughout the 1980s, despite more sophisticated examinations of the relationship between settlement morphology, social space and social organisation, these models continued to emphasise rather simplistic models of Iron Age societies. Cunliffe's work at Danebury was influential in promoting an, albeit modified, picture of 'Celtic' society as hierarchical, based around patrilineal chieftains. The household continued to be viewed in terms of an economic unit, producing for a hillfort elite, rather than on its own terms (Cunliffe 1984c, 1991).

Two of the successes of Hingley's (1984a, b) work was to promote more complex models of Iron Age society along with the realisation that much of the settlement evidence from southern Britain beyond the Danebury environs did not fit the central place model. Rather than there being a uniform 'Iron Age society', there were potentially various 'societies', with

no single model of household or community organisation dominating. Hingley also claimed that settlement form directly reflected one form of community organisation. Numerous studies have viewed enclosed settlements as representing family units (e.g. Bersu 1940) whilst studies of hillforts have either visualised village communities, chieftain strongholds, communal storage complexes depending on the theoretical standpoint and research fashions (e.g. Harding 1972a; 1976; Cunliffe 1984; Hill 1996).

In all of these studies details on the nature of community are often sketchy. Convenient building blocks, such as “the household”, emerge which are used to explain the living unit of a household or an enclosure without being explicitly defined. The assumption that the building brick of Iron Age communities was the household group has to some extent become axiomatic. Often undefined, it is often assumed as consisting of some form of extended nuclear family group, perhaps consisting of a man (usually, implicitly defined as the head), woman, children and perhaps extended relatives. More recently, post processual studies and the influence of agency have stressed that household form was not a monolithic and unchanging entity; but changed not just over broad scales of time or between social and cultural contexts but within the life of individuals, families and communities (Bruck and Goodman 1999, 5; Giles and Parker-Pearson 1999). Whilst this is useful in accepting the relativism of household form and moving away from monolithic entities it perhaps underplays the potential for broader structures of household form which are reflected in the architecture, location and changing nature of settlement form, as suggested in recent studies, particularly in areas where building forms and phases are well preserved (e.g. Gerritsen 2003; Webley *forthcoming*).

Despite the theoretical advances since Clarke and Hingley, therefore, we still know little of the nature of Iron Age community organisation or of the nature of the ‘household’. The actual nature of social reproduction and how communities were organised has often been ignored with the recognition of structured deposition seemingly providing cosmological reasoning for nature of the archaeology. Because of the failings of Clarke’s model, and dominance of ‘Celtic’ approaches to social modeling, little time has been spent trying to reconstruct how Iron Age communities interacted and existed and how this might be reflected in the archaeological record. Basic aspects of society are poorly understood. JD Hill (*pers comm*), for example, has recently suggested a young mortality of Iron Age populations which may indicate rather different social groups than are often envisaged. The work has not yet seriously been examined, and the poverty of the osteological record constrains analysis, but such claims challenge us to ask whether the chieftain patriarchs of a ‘Celtic’ model really existed. Analysis of human remains (5.5) suggests no simple models of hierarchy or

patriarchy are immediately discernable suggesting the complexity of the archaeology reflects a complexity in social structure and organisation.

### *5.1.2 Theoretical problems of recreating society from settlement space*

The greatest problem of previous approaches to social modeling is the tendency to create generalised models based on an often simplistic reading of the archaeological evidence. This in part may stem from particular approaches to the material. This may be a product of many recent anthropological and post-processual approaches to the study of settlement space which often view that “theory must take primacy over data” (Hingley 1984a, 72). Hingley, for example, rather than working from the settlement evidence upwards, imposes concepts of kinship and society from above to interpret the material evidence. Such a method may overlook complexity in the material which may suggest a more complex and varied picture of Iron Age society. The purpose of this study, on both the macro and micro level, is to obtain some concept of society from the material rather than impose concepts based on anthropological or theoretical models.

Study of the cropmark data in Chapter 4 and 6 challenges the assumption that these communities were independent. Instead there is growing evidence that such groups were integrated on a variety of levels of interaction. To what extent then can we continue to assume that the enclosures so common across the region consisted of a single household group? Moreover, can we continue to view ‘unenclosed’ settlements of the type found in the upper Thames as ‘proto-villages’, as suggested by Hingley? Hill (1999) has suggested that many unenclosed settlements may be smaller communities shifting across the landscape rather than large agglomerations of people, and there is some evidence for shifting at sites like Claydon Pike and Hallen. In contrast to the EIA, however, houses at sites like Claydon Pike appear to become more permanent and defined within these settlements (see below). Another issue, which emerges in all such studies, is the relationship between settlement form and layout with social organisation. Hingley (1984a) claimed that; “space is utilised in human society to symbolise social relationship”. Hingley therefore, in some ways similar to Clarke, saw a direct link between the nature of kinship organisation and settlement form.

Recent approaches stress that space is used in variety of ways in expressing perceptions of space and cosmology (e.g. Bowden and McOmish 1987; Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994; Parker-Pearson 1996) but it is still debatable as to what extent (and how) settlement space could truly reflect social organisation. Recent approaches have stressed more dynamic and complex models where individual groups re-model their space and landscape based on

gender, status and through time (Moore 1986; Chadwick 1999; Giles *forthcoming*). Such studies have realised that settlement layout does not necessarily directly reflect social organisation, but instead peoples perceptions of space with local traditions and beliefs effecting the way in which space is used. In addition, recent theory (Hodder 1991; Bruck and Goodman 1999) has suggested that household, individuals and societies are in a constant state of reforming themselves in the process of restructuring in relation to agency. Earlier models are less flexible in explaining settlements that do not fit these broad patterns. Often such settlements are regarded as anomalies in the drive to see theory override data. In addition, generalised rules, such as distance equates to social isolation and closeness to social nearness, does not accommodate cultural diversity, which may have very different perceptions of distance than these, essentially modern, perceptions imply. Hingley's model also suffers from a lack of chronological depth, and there is a danger in it regarding settlement form as essentially static, a direct consequence perhaps of a reliance on cropmark data (Haselgrove 1984).

Hingley and others (e.g. Ferrell 1995), also directly relate settlement space to the 'mode of production'. Such models move away from a direct functionalist explanation for settlement form that had dominated many less detailed studies, but regard social organisation from a Marxist perspective; that the way in which communities are constructed will be directly related to their agricultural system. Whilst agricultural system may be significant it is important not to see this as dominant in defining how social space is used. Communities with similar economic modes of production may have very different settlement forms.

The relationship between space and social organisation, therefore, remains unclear although is certainly more complex than envisaged in the models of Clarke and Hingley. Despite these criticisms, Hingley's study in particular was important in realising a far greater awareness of the nature of kinship organisation is required. Similarly, whilst reinterpretation of the site by Coles and Minnit (1995) indicates a more complex set of social relations, Clarke's concept that space within the settlement was constructed along social lines, and affirmed and reflected social relations within the settlement, was one that still has validity and reflects the concept that settlement space is as much socially constructed as functional.

There are problems with the current relativist approach to social organisation and settlement form in that if each community's perceptions of space was entirely individual then surely each settlement and house form would look entirely different, merely within the constraints of functionality and technology. But of course, patterns and similarities exist: on the large scale, with the almost universal use of round houses as the main structural form in the British Isles,

and on the local scale with variations in settlement form within such regions as the Severn-Cotswolds (Ch. 4).

Such similarities stress the existence of mental templates; the way things should be done, through building traditions and include the nature of community and household. These exist in a mental framework of space, and its structural rules that must be transmitted in a social context. Basso (1999) for example, has noted that whilst peoples understanding of the landscape is symbolically constituted this is “socially transmitted” as well as “individually applied”. In other words concepts of space (and this may be applied to community) are transmitted through social understanding by the peer group and wider society as well as applied (and transfigured or reshaped) through the kaleidoscope of the individual (cf. Hodder 1991, 9). It is this process of transformation, which is represented by the varying and changing material record that we are left to deal with.

The concept of syncretism (Greenfield and Droogers 2001) may allow for such re-modeling through the actions of individual communities whilst acting within the wider rules of space. Such theories accept that ideas can be modified by individuals and communities whilst operating in wider conceptual framework. This may help to explain what we might regard as the idiosyncrasies of the settlement record. Moving further, however, it becomes clear that it is incorrect to regard some settlements or communities as *idiosyncratic* or rejecting the accepted norm but instead to see *all* communities as *idiosyncratic* – reworking these social concepts of space through their own actions and continuing remodeling by the community. In this way the entire existence of ‘norms’ and ‘anomalies’ is broken down – codes of spatial use exist but only in the subconscious of communities, with the ability to be modified in different contexts. On occasion such differences may be conscious rejections or acceptances of certain uses of space whilst others may be unconscious modifications.

Such an approach also allows the acceptance of larger patterns. Whilst no two settlements will be laid out on a uniform model, certain social practices in the community’s consciousness are likely to be reflected in settlement organisation. Some of these practices may be regional, reflecting local ways of organising the community and/or the settlement layout whilst other may be far more local (e.g. certain building techniques) and others have far wider currency (e.g. doorway orientation). Any approach, therefore, to modelling social organisation through settlement space has to be cautious against ‘reading off’ the meaning and use of space on settlements in indicating, both social form and organisation (e.g. Clarke 1972; Hingley 1984a) or cosmological understanding of space (e.g. Parker-Pearson 1996). In particular, a simplistic

relationship between community or household organisation and settlement form must be avoided.

However, the broad patterns visible in settlement form across the region must have some significance in suggesting similar attitudes towards the use of space. As Ferrell notes (1995, 134), widely differing settlement forms, such as the curvilinear and rectilinear enclosures of north east England imply “very different spatial requirements”. In addition, change in this use of that space may suggest wider social changes in society. The potential of identifying social change through changes in settlement architecture has also been stressed by recent work on Iron Age houses (Pope 2003; Webley *forthcoming*). Webley (*forthcoming*), for example, identifies a marked change in the nature of the house and settlement form which reflects a change in the social organisation of the social groups. One of the successes of such work is identifying broad changes in the material and accepting that broad changes over long time spans may reflect long term changes in social organisation.

## **5.2 The Analysis**

### ***5.2.1 Problems with the evidence from the Study area***

With the above issues in mind, a detailed examination was made of the form and layout of sites in the study area. A variety of settlement forms exist (Ch.4) and may express different social forms and functional requirements. A number of questions were asked of the material. Firstly, to what extent is there evidence for change over time in settlement form and organisation of space? What implications do any such changes have for any change in the nature of social organisation through the period from 800BC- AD100? Secondly, do regional differences in settlement form suggest differences in social structure? Do any differences represent regionally specific cultural differences? Also, do different settlement forms show similar concerns with the use of space despite their apparent morphological differences.

Within the broader pattern of settlement form, obvious variety exists in the same period, varying in function or agricultural subsistence. Caution must therefore be shown in not creating a uniform settlement organisation; each settlement and community will have shaped their settlement and environment in specific ways and this alone must explain *some* of the variation in settlement form. But, beyond this, wider patterns are likely to reflect larger cultural attitudes towards settlement space, as seen with the pattern of enclosure entrance orientation, for example.

One of the dangers of such an analysis is that it can regard settlements as static and unchanging<sup>36</sup>. Thus the layout of a settlement can be seen as a single phase. For example an enclosure can be seen as one single laid out settlement. The reality is likely to be very different; that with each generation or circumstance the layout of the settlement changes and was modified to fit in with current functional requirements, social relationships or fashions. In some cases such changes may be obvious, the shift from enclosed to unenclosed or even on the subtle but archaeological visible side, the placement of a separate enclosure within the wider enclosure. Often however, the pattern of small adjustments are likely to either be invisible or too entangled in a chronologically unspecific number of additions and changes (see Frocester below for example). We may end up producing a homogenous view of the settlement layout, incorporating many phases of activity which do not belong together and recreating a settlement organisation that never existed in the past.

Analysis of sites shows that divisions such as enclosed and unenclosed are too simplistic and that even on sites that appear at first glance to be simple, the role of enclosures can be complex. At numerous sites enclosures have been found to be part of wider complexes of settlement. This is not just at the complex 'unenclosed' settlements in the upper Thames and Severn valleys, but also what have been regarded as more discreet enclosures. At Windrush for example, the curvilinear enclosure may be part of wider unenclosed settlement whilst at Guiting Power (Saville 1979), the rectilinear enclosure appears to be separate from activity (evidenced by the clusters of pits) to the south east.

Despite the size of the study area few settlements have been excavated to a sufficient extent or standard to allow detailed interpretation of the organisation of the settlement. Even at sites where entire settlements have been excavated, as at Frocester (Price 2000), the phasing of structures and features may be uncertain, making it difficult to be sure what features are contemporary thus drawing any inference for site layout. These problems mean that this study has to rely on a few more fully excavated sites and inferences from a variety of partially excavated sites, older excavations and interim reports on unpublished sites. This is far from satisfactory and open to the criticism that there is no reason why sites of similar morphology may have had similar layouts. This study does not therefore attempt to apply generalised models to site layout/organisation based on the imperfect morphological groups used in Chapter 4, or to infer that all settlement layouts were the same. As discussed above, each settlement represents the actions of individual communities to layout their space. However,

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<sup>36</sup> see Haselgrove (1984) on Hingley, and Barrett (1987) on Clarke for such criticisms.

site layout does alter drastically across the region and these differences need to be explained beyond functional terms and in relation to social relations.

A number of studies have attempted to assess such differences in different ways. Ferrell (1995), for example, used a BUB (built to unbuilt space) analysis. There are difficulties with such analyses. The quality of many excavations in the study area cautions against assuming an accurate assessment of 'built space' can be gauged at each phase of a settlements life. Such a model is also restricted to enclosed settlements and it may be far harder to establish the use of spaces around and beyond 'unenclosed' settlements. Even with enclosures it assumes that the enclosed space represents the entire activity area and ignores space beyond the enclosure. In common with other analyses, it is also in danger of ignoring chronological change and view spatial use as rather static. Despite these problems Ferrell (1995, 135) did identify apparently well defined differences in spatial use between curvilinear and rectilinear enclosures, implying that settlement type was related to settlement layout and hence social organisation (see Ch. 4).

An additional problem is that the excavation or survey has tended to be restricted to the interior of such settlements, this can be seen at the major enclosure and hillfort excavations, missing any activities beyond the enclosure boundary. These may have formed vital components in the nature and use of space and additionally infer much about the communities attitudes towards space and enclosure. This excavation strategy, as noted above and in Chapter 4, may have reinforced the possibly false dichotomy between enclosed and unenclosed settlement.

Mention must also be made of relating material culture finds associated with structures or areas of the site, as directly indicating functions of the structures or activity areas. A number of analyses (e.g. Clarke 1972) have drawn a direct link between *in situ* finds and working areas. There are a number of dangers in doing this. Glastonbury in particular has problems in the location of finds and movement through the soil (Barrett 1987). However, the processes where by finds arrive in the archaeological record may be complex and cannot be used to imply particular function of a structure. In addition, the process of structured deposition in the Iron Age (e.g. Hill 1995; Parker-Pearson 1996) may have effected artefact placement and location. This in itself may be useful in examining attitudes to space (e.g. Hingley 1990a, b; Oswald 1997) but cautions against adopting direct indications of activity areas or roles for particular structures. The following analysis therefore has been careful in not seeing finds as indicating direct relations to a structures role or purpose, although in some cases such relationships may be justified.

In order to look at the organisation of settlement on the micro scale, sites were divided broadly along the lines used for the analysis in Chapter 4. These categorisations are used as a method of grouping sites without any implicit unity within the categories. Indeed, it becomes clear that in many cases, whilst settlement morphology may differ, there are similarities between communities' attitudes towards settlement space. Due to the small number of sites where detailed comments could be made on the use of space in the settlement this was deemed useful. Given the lack of intensely excavated sites, a number of sites from the margins of the study area have been included in this discussion, including Cadbury Castle and Mingies Ditch.

### *5.2.2 Enclosed settlements*

#### *5.2.2.1 Early Iron Age*

As shown in Chapter 4 EIA enclosed settlements are rare in both the north and south of the region. Groundwell Farm (Gingell and Gingell 1981) of EIA-MIA date shows some similarities to other upper Thames sites with evidence that the house shifted around the settlement. At Mingies Ditch an apparent clockwise shift has been indicated, although this is not apparent at Groundwell. However, the cutting of earlier houses by later ones indicates that Groundwell does appear to be represented by a single roundhouse as the presumed main living area and a number of rectangular structures. In one phase at least (H2) the roundhouse appears to be situated in a distinct enclosure, with two entrances (Fig. 5.2.2.1.1). This reflects apparent similar situation at a number of the houses at Claydon Pike. In some cases this cannot be explained as a separate drainage gully but as at Structure I at Claydon, appears to separate the house from the outside. On open sites such as Claydon this may be explained as dividing the house from the rest of the community rather than necessarily a particular need for drainage (see below). An alternative, functionalist explanation might be that the exterior fenced enclosure might be to separate the house from animals roaming the interior of the enclosure.

The Groundwell West enclosure contrasts in form with other enclosures in the region (Walker *et al* 2001; Fig. 5.2.2.1.2). An unenclosed settlement of EIA date was superseded by a funnel enclosure with a single roundhouse later rebuilt with a later D-shaped enclosure in the final phase. Particularly with the later phases it is difficult to know which houses are contemporary and hut 7, which appears to face the later enclosure ditch and hut 4, cut by this ditch, may suggest an early unenclosed phase to the settlement. The sequence of unenclosed to enclosed

appears to reflect that seen elsewhere (e.g. Frocester, Bathampton; see Ch. 6) and the latest phase may mark the apparent move to more well defined enclosures in the later Iron Age.

Use of space in the earlier settlement suggests a slightly different approach to settlement layout. The second phase, hour-glass enclosure has lines of storage pits along the inside of the enclosure ditch with the later phase having pits on the outside of enclosure ditch (Fig. 5.2.2.1.2). The latter may have implications for ideas of outside/inside and storage pits (if that is what they are) on the *outside* of the ditch may indicate certain roles for the enclosure ditch, such as defence, seem unlikely. This use of pit alignments to bound social space perhaps has more in common with unenclosed settlements like Butlers Field (below) where the alignments, as well as acting as field boundaries, may also have defined domestic space. To describe Groundwell West as an 'enclosure', therefore, is somewhat misleading and it may have more in common with early unenclosed sites.

The kind of social units at such settlements is not all together clear but imply household units rather than larger agglomerations, perhaps visible in the LBA at Hucclecote and Shorncombe, might be suggested as mirroring that suggested in parts of Wessex (Hawkes 1994; Cunliffe 2000, 176). Even with some of the enclosed settlements of the early period however, it appears that such communities only felt the need to enclose themselves later on in the life of the settlement (Fig 5.2.2.1.2).

#### ***5.2.2.2. Later Iron Age enclosures***

Frocester in the Severn valley (Fig. 5.2.2.2.1; Price 2000) is one of the most fully excavated sites with the entire extent of the trapezoidal shaped enclosure extending just beyond the main enclosure revealed, enabling a relatively detailed assessment of the nature of spatial organisation. There are a number of possible problems which may impinge on our interpretation of the site layout. The site was later superceded by a Roman villa destroying possibly large areas of the site. The complexity of the site has also entailed that the phasing of structures and relationship between features is not always entirely clear cut making it difficult to draw up plans of the nature of the site at particular periods in its development. For these reasons some structures may have been missed and the relationship of some features confused. In particular, there appears to be a large circular structure seemingly cut by the enclosure ditch (ADDIT, Fig. 5.2.2.2.1). This has important implications suggesting a possible early unenclosed settlement prior to the later Iron Age enclosure (see Ch. 6). Despite these problems the scale and extent of the excavation and high quality publication make it one of the best sites to examine some issues of site organisation.

One of the most striking aspects of the enclosures is the division of the main enclosure into two or three defined areas which appear to be retained for some time, represented by the reuse of this division by the later linear defining the same bi-polarity. The division is defined by the internal path or track, which leads from the entrance the rear of the settlement. The enclosure appears to be divided into distinct blocks. If the structures in blocks A-D (see Fig. 5.2.2.2.1) represent living quarters we may see household divisions of the interior. Each defined area appears to have at least one circular structure but not all occupied contemporaneously, although there is some evidence that a number may have been rebuilt in the same location. There may, therefore, have been just one roundhouse occupied at any one time. However, structures may have been missed and the ephemeral nature of those that were noted indicates that preservation of some of the prehistoric structures was relatively poor. Alternatively, therefore, the areas may represent distinct areas for the carrying out of different activities associated with the settlement or represent areas of storage.

From phases 2.2a onwards the interior of the enclosure was divided again with more defined internal enclosures which the excavator interpreted as small farm plots (although there is no evidence to indicate this was their purpose). These appear to match the conjoined area of the enclosure which appears to undergo a variety of complex modifications eventually being interlinked with the internal enclosures in later phases. The nature of this arrangement is unclear apparently negating the point of the main enclosure and inexplicably linking the internal and external enclosures.

If correct, the nature and need for the internal divisions is uncertain. One explanation is their use as garden plots separated from livestock. The lack of apparent structures within these later enclosures would imply that they were not used as a means of dividing off living structures. However, the division appears to continue the earlier phases (2.2 and 2.3) division of the interior of the main enclosure into northern and southern quadrants. Both the earlier phases then subdivided the interior into separate sectors, each one containing a separate structure although the phasing of these structures by Price suggests these are not contemporary with the divisions. One of these quadrants contained structure 6 which was constructed over a small rectangular structure (6a) (Ibid. 56) (Fig. 5.2.2.2.2). This has been interpreted as a shrine due to the presence of cattle, human and horse bones in pits beneath the structure. The interpretation as a shrine is uncertain but it is notable that the round structure on top of 6a has a north facing entrance in contrast to most houses and may imply some special function for the building.

The division of the enclosure appears also to have created a distinct space for non-circular structures to the rear of the enclosure (structures 3, 2, 11, 18, 17) and may imply this area had a particular role for storage or non-domestic activities. The dating of these is not entirely clear but they appear to be contemporary with the LIA phase, possibly even contemporary with the LIA/ER rectangular buildings (Price 2000, 67). However, dating of a number of the circular structures, such as Structure 7, indicates they may well be contemporary with these features.

The impression from Frocester is of a desire to formally define space and, even within an enclosure of just 40m by 80m, there was a need to define and distinguish separate spaces. Unfortunately, it is difficult to say whether this was to provide distinct areas for separate activities, such as storage, or to separate family or household groups. The issue of how many circular structures co-existed at Frocester is also problematic but crucial in understanding the nature of the community living within such enclosures. Structure 7 shows evidence that at least one structure was rebuilt on the same location but apart from this it is uncertain whether any of the other structures were contemporary. Price appears to imply that in each phase at least one larger roundhouse existed on the site with perhaps a number of smaller structures in the other compounds. The implication is of a single household unit occupying the larger house and the others used for other activities. The archaeology is actually, however, not entirely clear on this and this may be as much to do with the assumption of enclosures as representing a single household unit, with subsidiary non-domestic structures, rather than a real picture of the site.

Examination of the layout of Frocester, although offering some insights in to the nature of the organisation of such enclosures, still raises many issues. Even on this site it is unclear whether the enclosure was occupied by a single-family unit or a number of households co-existing. What is notable is that despite the enclosing of the area as a whole with the large enclosure boundary ditch, the site showed evidence of complex and long lasting divisions of the interior, being restructured at least three or four times often along the same lines. This division reflected the location of the earlier linear and the separation of the enclosure into a northern and southern sector was re-affirmed a number of times through the life of the enclosure.

Other SRE enclosures of later Iron Age date include those investigated by Marshall (1990b; 1991; 1995; 2001) in the northern Cotswolds, including Middle Ground, Lower Barn, The Bowsings and conjoined 'enclosure' at The Park. Marshall's observations suggest that whilst the SRE enclosures show diversity there are some similarities in the layout of a number of examples from the northern Cotswolds such as the evidence for a single larger pit (described by Marshall as a 'silo') in the corner. These may imply a single grain store for the site, which

on experimental evidence could be successfully re-used (Reynolds 1976) although elsewhere a single use for storage pits has been stressed (e.g. Cunliffe 1992, 1995). If correct, the use of a single silo may have implications for the size of community, perhaps suggesting a single pit for the household. Evidence from Guiting Power (Saville 1979), however, may indicate that further such pits exist in the, uninvestigated, area beyond the enclosure boundaries.

A number of these enclosures also show evidence of apparent internal division. At The Bowsings for example Marshall notes (2001, Plate 1) the apparent trackway (or linear division of some sort) between the northern and southern zone of the site. The northern half appears to have more evidence for pits and other structures. This may reflect the apparent bipolar division seen at Frocester (see above). This division may also be evident at Lower Barn and Middle Ground enclosures, although Marshall's illustrations are less clear. It is perhaps important that the division does not appear to have any over-riding structure between settlements; at the Bowsings and Lower Barn the northern half is occupied by activity whilst at Middle Ground it is situated in the southern half. In addition, there does not appear to be any rule governing the placement of these silo pits, all examples being situated in different corners of the site (Fig. 5.2.2.2.3a-c).

The Park (Marshall 1990b) contrasts with these other enclosures (Fig. 5.2.2.2.3d). Its morphology is quite different and is perhaps better compared to the agglomerated enclosures of sites like Cribbs Causeway (see below), in terms of its use of space, than the other SRE enclosures. Here, the habitation area appears to be separated in to a distinct enclosed area adjoined to a track with a second enclosure to the rear. The living area (or main foci of activity) for the settlement is thus less embellished and people moving through the space are able to move past the habitation areas by the adjoining track to enter the rear enclosed space. Most striking is the apparent construction of the site using segmented pit alignments rather than continuous enclosure boundaries (Marshall 1990b, 3) again stressing less defining of social space. In some cases apparent storage pits were used to bound the settlement and can be compared to similar examples at Groundwell West (Fig. 5.2.2.1.2; Walker *et al* 2001), Ashton Keynes/Shorncote (Hey 2000) and Ashton Keynes/Shorncote (Brossler *et al* 2002). A similar example may exist at Parsons Piece (Marshall 1990b, 9) also apparently made up of segmented ditch/pit alignments as boundaries, although information on the site is severely limited. As The Park appears to pre date the Bowsings (Fig. 5.2.2.2.3a; Marshall 1995), this may indicate a change in the requirements and needs of the community (assuming it is the same community) in the later period and a greater need to define the domestic area from other activity.

Other SRE enclosures in the region include Birdlip [12], Beckford I [210] and Wyre Piddle [168] to which can be compared smaller investigations at sites such as Cradley [653] in the north of the region. Each of these has its own peculiarities but similarities in layout stress similar social and spatial arrangements. The SRE enclosure at Beckford I (Oswald 1974), represents a rectangular enclosure similar to other enclosures in the area and examples from Warwickshire. Beckford consists of a single enclosure with a number of structures within; one of which appears to represent the main domestic unit. The main structure at Beckford appears to have been replaced on the same spot a multitude of times. Oswald (1974) describes three phases to the structure but many more rebuilding phases seem likely, perhaps as many as seven. The stratigraphic location of dating evidence from the structures is not entirely clear but appears to suggest these structures were rebuilt quite quickly in the latest Iron Age, possibly between the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Along the interior of the ditch are rows of apparent pits in a similar situation to those seen at Groundwell West (Walker *et al* 2001) indicating a lack of internal bank in the enclosure and reinforcing the association between storage pits and boundary features seen elsewhere. Beckford is also rare for sites in the region in containing an internal palisade. It is unclear whether this is contemporary with the enclosure ditch, Oswald claiming that is of earlier date, although the discreet relationship of the ditch to most of the palisades<sup>37</sup> may indicate contemporaneity with at least some of the palisade phases.

An internal division of the enclosure, with at least three phases, divides the enclosure between western and eastern sections. This division appears to be contemporary with the palisades and may have been replaced with each subsequent palisade phase. It is unclear if this is contemporary with structure 3. In general Beckford represents similar use of space to that seen at the other smaller enclosures. Similar internal divisions of SRE enclosures are visible at Cradley (Fig.4.2.1.1b), with a similar partition of the corner, and can be seen in cropmark sites in the Severn Valley at Kempsey and Broadway (Fig. 6.1.2.5). Further afield a similar corner partition is visible at Barton Court, Oxfordshire (Fig. 4.2.1.1b). The role of such partitions is unclear, primarily because few have been excavated, and that at Beckford was lacking in internal features. Analogy with sites near by such as Beckford II (see below) and Evesham, suggests that smaller internal enclosures in wider enclosures may have performed roles for specific activities which for functional or symbolic reason needed to be defined from the rest of the settlement space.

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<sup>37</sup> Except palisade 1, which is cut by the enclosure ditch (see Oswald 1974, fig. 1)

The agglomerated or 'unenclosed' site at Beckford II (Fig 5.2.2.2.4; Fig. 4.2.4.1b; Britnell 1974) further stresses the role of separate enclosures and internal division of space in an apparently larger enclosed settings. Some of these seemingly performed distinct non-domestic functions. At Evesham (Fig. 5.2.2.2.4; Edwards and Hurst 2000) too, similar smaller enclosures to those at Beckford existed as part of a wider settlement complex. It is difficult to be certain what form the wider complex took but it seems likely to have been 'unenclosed' at least in not having a single enclosing boundary. What is notable about such enclosures is their small size but the importance placed upon definition, represented by substantially cut ditches rather than more ephemeral fence lines. This, is a key issue: that whilst recognition of such division is greater archaeologically, and it is possible that more ephemeral divisions may have been missed on other forms of early settlements (see below), in the later Iron Age the act of creating such divisions was important and defining internal space a priority. The two smaller enclosures at Ermin Farm (Mudd *et al* 1999) may comprise a similar complex of small clustered enclosures and again it appears that rather than domestic areas they enclosed activity areas. Understanding spatial layout on other later Iron Age enclosures is more difficult. Excavation at the 'enclosures' of Preston, Birdlip, Ermin Farm and the Duntisbourne do not enable a detailed reconstruction of the interiors. What is known of Preston suggests similar arrangement of potentially a single roundhouse and smaller working areas defined by gullies.

### ***5.2.3 'Unenclosed' settlements***

There are obvious variations in unenclosed settlement, cautioning against over generalisation of the relationship with social organisation, a possible flaw in Hingley's approach. As discussed earlier, the nature of many so-called 'unenclosed' sites of the later period, suggests that the bounding of space and organisation of these settlements was as important as at enclosed sites. It is important to first distinguish between the earlier 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC unenclosed sites and those from the later period. A number of the LBA and earlier Iron Age unenclosed settlements appear to have similar morphology and reflect that seen in other areas near by, particularly the Thames Valley.

#### ***5.2.3.1 Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age***

The LBA settlement at Shorncote (Hearne and Heaton 1994; Hearne and Adams 1999) continues a trend of LBA and EIA unenclosed sites recognised in the Thames Valley (e.g. Moore and Jennings 1992). The site contained a range of circular buildings and other

structures excavated over a long period. Of particular importance, is the observation by the excavator (Hearne and Adams 1999, 70) that the plan is true reflection of the LBA settlement and not related to differential survival (Fig 5.2.3.1.1).

There is some indication based on changes in the pottery fabric (Hearne and Adams 1999,70) that the settlement migrated from the central area of the site migrating to the north and south over time. The extent to which the settlement either represents a migrating smaller settlement as opposed to a larger settlement is uncertain. Evidence from the 1999 investigations indicates replacement of a number of structures indicating a least some chronological depth at one location. The structures 2497, 2485, 2313 suggest that some houses were replaced sequentially presumably by the same household. The site plan (Hearne 1999, Fig. 3) also indicates that the area occupied by the earlier funerary monuments of early Bronze Age and late Neolithic date, is not occupied by later Bronze Age houses and it seems likely that these monuments were still visible and were respected by the roundhouses. It is important to note that earlier land use and monuments may have had a conscious or unconscious effect on the use of space by later settlements, and may also be seen with the apparent Bronze Age barrow in the later Iron Age enclosure at Birdlip.

The nature of community is far more difficult to establish than with later sites. Virtually no internal boundaries were found on the site to indicate separate areas, although a number of short tentative fence lines were identified. The relatively good preservation suggests that if any division within the settlement did exist they comprised of relatively ephemeral fences or hedges. There is some slight indication though of distinct area for rectilinear post structures in the south eastern part of the site, possibly delineating a separate storage or activity area. Similar division of space has been identified on a number of unenclosed LBA and EIA sites elsewhere in southern Britain (e.g. Ashwin 1999, 114).

At least one structure is situated in a separate enclosure with a south west facing entrance. It is notable that the structure retains an apparent SE entrance<sup>38</sup> whilst having this 'paddock' to the rear of the settlement. It is the only structure to have a separate working area, however, the small size of the structure may suggest it is unlikely that it was a building of distinct status. Of the larger structures on site, around 10m in diameter, both seem suspect as real structures and would explain their divergence from the size range seen with the other buildings on site. Shorcote should perhaps be best envisaged as a number of households, perhaps loosely affiliated shifting across a wide area of the landscape.

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<sup>38</sup> if we accept the larger post holes on the SE side as entrance posts

The unenclosed roundhouses at Hucclecote near Gloucester (Thomas *et al* 2003) of broadly 8<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century BC date, provide the first hints that similar spreads of unenclosed, post built roundhouses existed on the gravel terraces of the Severn valley. Alongside the seemingly unenclosed hilltop settlements at Thornwell and Trostrey it suggests a similar preference for unenclosed settlements in the west of the region. The arrangement of the Hucclecote group is less clear than Shorncote but a key feature is the existence of a single, large double post ring house, comparable in size to the large house at Crickley (Fig. 5.3.1.1). The role of such a larger houses is debatable but if, as suggested for the Crickley example (Phil Dixon *pers comm*), it defined a higher status family or individual, then the example at Hucclecote may also stress the existence of hierarchy on unenclosed sites as well as hillfort enclosures. This may be key in indicating that such unenclosed sites need not represent egalitarian societies and potentially even represented similar social groups to those within hilltop enclosures.

The EIA unenclosed settlements at Roughground Farm (Allen *et al* 1993) and Butlers Field (Boyle *et al* 1998) contain similar post built structures to those at Shorncote (see below) but appear to represent much smaller communities in isolated roundhouses in amongst complexes of field systems. The indication appears to be of relatively ephemeral settlements which, whilst existing in heavily defined and divided landscapes of field boundaries, did not feel the need to draw a (well-defined) distinction around their particular settlement. Other EIA unenclosed settlements, particularly those in the south, are harder to define. The small D-shaped enclosure at Field Farm appears to represent an enclosure possibly part of wider unenclosed settlement and as such may show greater similarities perhaps with later 'unenclosed' settlements like Cannard's Grave. Of the potentially early unenclosed sites at Chew Park and Dibbles Farm little can be said about organisation.

On such limited evidence, it can be suggested that earlier settlements show less consideration for the definition of the house in the landscape. More importance seems to have been placed in the field boundaries, some of which appear to have remained significant in to the later Iron Age (see Ch.6). The large areas cleared by the excavations as a result of gravel extraction have shown the extent that LBA and EIA sites are extremely difficult to identify, consisting of post built houses in spreading unenclosed settlements, and that many more examples may well exist across the gravels of the upper Thames, Windrush and Severn valley.

### **5.2.3.2. Later Iron Age**

Later Iron Age unenclosed settlements show a seemingly distinct morphology from early sites. At Hallen (Fig. 5.2.3.2.1; Barnes 1993, 9; Gardiner *et al* 2002) in the Avon levels, circular structures are situated within larger compounds with apparent multiple phases. These enclosures have similarities with the larger drainage gullies surrounding structures at Claydon Pike and Salmonsbury. As at these sites, there may be some indication that these ditches had a role beyond mere drainage of the area around the houses. It appears that the physical separation may also have been important. Certainly the examples at Hallen enclose larger areas than the houses themselves.

It is unclear from the interim report whether the two compounds are contemporary. If so, then it may represent, as claimed elsewhere, two distinct households, eager to express their social exclusion from each other, whilst existing in the same community or alternatively the shift of a single household. The report appears to indicate further deposits beyond the excavated areas (Barnes *et al* 1993, fig. 3) and more structures may well exist beyond the margins of the excavated area perhaps representing a larger settlement complex representing shifting communities across the area, as suggested at Claydon Pike (Hingley and Miles 1984).

The environmental evidence from Hallen suggests a similar agricultural regime to the unenclosed buildings in the Gwent level; based primarily on animal grazing of cattle and sheep. Why then divergent architecture between these two very similar landscapes on opposite sides of the Severn? Potentially it could mark a cultural difference between the two regions and if the rectangular buildings in the Gwent levels are domestic structures (Moore 2003)<sup>39</sup>, then the differences in spatial use, seemingly reflecting that seen in structures from the near continent (Waterbolk 1995; Gerritsen 2003) suggests some contrasting attitudes to space and potentially social organisation.

Claydon Pike (Hingley and Miles 1984) further indicates the differences between earlier unenclosed sites, such as that at Shorncliffe, and later unenclosed sites. House I, for example, is situated within its own separate enclosure, approximately 25m in diameter, which includes separate working areas. In similarity to sites such as Cribbs Causeway, the house is divided by a large enclosure within the open settlement creating a distinct and separate space from the rest of the settlement. The requirement of large ditches encompassing the roundhouse may be for drainage – possibly required in such low-lying locations. The small gully leading from the interior of the enclosure to the main ditch as Structure XI in particular suggests that this was used to drain water or other fluids in to the exterior ditch (Fig. 5.2.4.1; Allen *et al* 1984).

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<sup>39</sup> although claimed as cattle byres by Gwilt (forthcoming).

However, the size and distance of the ditch at Structure I indicates that it had other functions; to separate the house from surrounding activity. This could be explained in further practical reasons in order to protect the house from animals (from eating the thatching for example), although why this was not required for the other structures on the site would require explanation. Another explanation may have been the bounding of that particular group, household or the activity taking place on that site. In addition the connecting of the ditch of structure XI with the marshy area may suggest that the gully was often or continually full of water, further adding to the division of space (cf. Evans 1997).

Similar smaller enclosures on 'unenclosed' sites exist at Abbeymeads and Saintbridge in the Severn Valley (Atkin 1987; 1991) (Fig. 5.3.1.3) reminiscent (but smaller) of the sub-oval enclosures encompassing roundhouses at Claydon Pike. Other examples of similar enclosures are visible as cropmarks from a range of sites in the upper Thames valley (see Darvill 1987). Elsewhere, at Cannard's Grave, Somerset it seems that the gully ditches acted as drainage ditches with post built structures inside, in many cases, as at Claydon where only the door post survive.

A further characteristic of these 'enclosed' roundhouses is the connection of the 'drainage' gullies between more than one house. This can be seen at later Iron Age examples at Claydon Pike, Cannard's Grave, Shorcote (MIA phase), structures at Salmonsbury (Fig. 5.3.1.2) and further examples beyond the study area in the Thames Valley (Allen 1984) and as far afield as Dorset (Bradley 1984, 141). In the case of Claydon Pike these may have been deliberately used to retain water not just for drainage but a social and symbolic definition of the household (cf. Evans 1997). In other cases the roles of these conjoined boundaries may have been to define further working areas presumably belonging to the house/household or would seemingly imply some connection between houses, perhaps marking kin relations between house groups or acting as secondary structures for that household. In either case there appears an emphasis on defining spatial connection between these structures and defining them from others.

Hingley and Miles (1984, 63) see the evidence at Claydon indicating the movement of single extended household across the gravel terrace from the 3<sup>rd</sup> c BC onward although Hingley also envisages these households as more socially connected (Hingley 1984a) into wider communities. The existence of enclosures for discreet houses may infer some form of hierarchy or distinction within these extended household groups or 'villages'.

### ***5.2.3.3. Other Later Iron Age unenclosed settlements***

Quite different forms of unenclosed settlement of later Iron Age date are also evident. These can be better described as truly unenclosed in contrast to those above, although in many cases the nature of the excavated evidence does not exclude the possibility of some form of bounding to such settlements which is less visible archaeologically, destroyed by later occupation (e.g. Butcombe) or existed beyond the excavated area. The 'unenclosed' or complex enclosures of Cribbs Causeway (and possibly Butcombe and Shapwick) are different to any other form in the region. Cribbs Causeway comprises conjoined enclosures forming a larger rather amorphous complex. They show perhaps greater similarity with the enclosures in the East Midlands (see 4.2.1) than the well defined enclosures elsewhere in the region or unenclosed settlements. This settlement form surely indicates a different concept and approach to space, possibly related to different agricultural regimes, social organisation of cultural concepts. Unfortunately, as with many sites in the region the limited excavation and brief publication of these sites hinder detailed analysis of their structural history.

Cribbs Causeway (King 1997) comprises a complex of conjoined enclosure of which only the enclosure containing a circular structure was excavated and is available only in an interim report. Despite these limitations it appears that the circular structure occupied a distinct enclosure, which was conjoined to a number of secondary enclosures (Fig. 4.2.1.2). This enclosure had a SE facing entrance leading into one of these secondary enclosures. It is presumed that these other enclosures were used as stock corrals or paddocks. The pits cutting the structure suggest that, at least in one phase of the site, a house did not occupy the enclosure and it fulfilled other roles. The excavator also suggests separate working area indicated by loom weights on the eastern side of the enclosure. This type of settlement can be described as being 'enclosed' from the surrounding landscape but without a single, well-defined enclosing boundary. The space in the enclosure, therefore, has less emphasis on placing the 'living' area as paramount, with the paddock enclosures of similar form and size. However, at the same time it divides apparent domestic space in a separate enclosure. This may relate to functional requirements, for example keeping cattle out of the main living area, but may also be important in defining the household within a more amorphous settlement, somewhat similar to that argued for some of the unenclosed sites above, such as Claydon.

Cribbs Causeway shares some similarities with Butcombe. The layout at Butcombe is difficult to disentangle. Fowler (1968) suggests an apparent Roman date for the walled complexes although it seems this may reflect an earlier layout of the site, which was certainly occupied earlier, in the mid-LIA (Fowler 1970). The space at Butcombe comprises a main enclosure, somewhat similar to that at Cribbs, within a wider system of enclosures around field and

possibly other activity areas. Excavation focused on the 'main' enclosure revealing it was divided into three segments. These divisions appear to be of early Roman date (Fowler 1970, 183) although may overlie LIA divisions with a partially revealed mid/late (?) Iron Age gully along similar lines to the later Roman walls. At least one of these divisions cuts an earlier (MIA?) roundhouse, although it is noticeable that its, seemingly embellished, entrance way is aligned with the enclosure entrance (subsequently built over by building A1 in the second early Roman phase).

In both cases these settlements may represent a distinct form in the lower Severn and Mendip region. What is apparent is the contrast to the enclosures like Frocester and Bowsings. These settlements have less embellishment of the division of settlement from each other and the landscape, with relationships seemingly less defined than through the settlement boundary. In this way, they have more in common with sites like The Park (and to some extent, Groundwell West), whereby access is less restricted and division from the surrounding area less defined. Such differences may indicate differences in perceptions of space and may suggest less desire or requirement to express isolation, social exclusion or household/community definition than the enclosures elsewhere. Reasons for this are uncertain; slightly different agricultural regimes may have been in practice, which required closer control and division of animals, although bone assemblages do not appear to reveal massive differences. It is more likely that social and/or symbolic exclusion from the 'outside' was deemed less important at such sites.

The evidence from Chew Park is more enigmatic. It appears to represent a single house with two phases (Rahtz and Greenfield 1977). The 'buildings' alongside these structures may be better regarded as multi-phase fence lines running away from the houses and the related evidence of multi-phase structures. The features have been claimed as being long granaries (Rahtz and Greenfield 1977, 34) but the suggestion by Tratman (*ibid*) that they represent a fence seems more likely considering the jumbled nature of the postholes. They may actually represent multiple phases of fence lines as opposed to Tratman's ideas of supported posts. Their appearance as two distinct features is probably due to the fact that three closely aligned Roman ditches have probably truncated them in the middle.

These features are replaced by ditches on a similar alignment in the LIA/early Roman period, within which the early Roman timber aisled building<sup>40</sup> was built on the same alignment. The suggestion is of continuity in site layout between the later Iron Age and early Roman phases.

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<sup>40</sup> similar to those seen at Frocester

Either way, in all phases apart from the fence lines, there is no indication that the Chew site is situated in any larger enclosure. It may differ somewhat from the Cribbs site and be a more ephemeral unenclosed settlement. Despite such an 'ephemeral' form it is important to note the longevity of occupation on the site and continuity of some status in to the Roman period.

#### *5.2.3.4 The Lake Villages*

The 'lake villages' at Glastonbury and Meare appear so distinct that placing them within any category is potentially unhelpful. Not just because of their exceptional location or state of preservation but also because their form appears to be very different to any other dry land site, they are best regarded as a category of their own. The exceptional preservation have ensured that their layout has been the focus of social studies (Bulleid and St. George-Gray 1919; Tratman 1970; Clarke 1972; Barrett 1987; Coles and Minnit 1995).

Coles and Minnit (1995, 200) suggest a possible populations Glastonbury Lake Village from 125 in the middle phases to possibly as much as 150-200 people at the height of occupation. This would compare with estimations we can assume of surely no more than 10-20 for most enclosures in the study area. The community then is vastly different to that on any other site type, excluding perhaps the larger hillforts. Even smaller hillforts like Conderton can surely not have had such large populations, even in the unlikely prospect that all houses were contemporary. The same may be argued of the unenclosed sites of the upper Thames valley if we accept that in most cases they represent the shifting of a settlement rather than larger agglomerations (cf. Hingley and Miles 1984, 77). Even if we consider that Coles and Minnit's population figures are exaggerated, the implication is still that the size and type of community is exceptional. However, the term 'lake village', resulting from the population figures, suggests a particular social set up which may be unhelpful. The material evidence implies the site may have been for specialist production and village may be an inappropriate term. In addition, Clarke's model suggested independent 'households' within a wider settlement which again might be argued for the unenclosed and enclosure clusters seen elsewhere in the region. In addition, such a form stresses a lack of hierarchy with households as semi-independent units with no overall authority.

The nature of the community then may be less like a 'village' structure or hillfort type hierarchy but more akin to a community of artisans operating as a unit in a 'marginal', liminal area of the landscape. As such, it may have more similarities to sites like Salmonsbury than other unenclosed communities in the region. The nature of layout and social organisation at Meare East and West are more difficult to establish. The structures from Meare appear more

ephemeral (Coles 1987; Coles and Minnit 1995), suggesting the site was perhaps only seasonally occupied compared to permanent occupation at Glastonbury. Again it is the lack of obvious social hierarchy within the settlement that is obvious and indicative of a community moving to the site to undertake certain tasks a looser social unit.

Coles and Minnit note the visibility of the site from the surrounding area, indicating its landscape location may have been important in a social context. This is particularly important for Glastonbury if we consider its possible roles as an exchange centre and meeting place (Sharples 1991b; Coles and Minnit 1995). Socially, an important question is the extent to which the communities at the Meare sites and Glastonbury, relied on exchange or other communities for many of their resources, such as building material, or collected this from the surrounding uplands. At Meare, at least, it seems likely that the upland may have been occupied and utilized by the community that operated on the lake village (Coles 1987, 249). A focus of future research must be to identify and assess such upland settlements in relation to these settlements. Coles (1987, 251) suggests the possibility that some communities may have moved permanently in to these lake village sites. If correct then it raises the question of why? The lake village sites have been regarded as peripheral, representing a “harbour [with] no conflict over ownership or land use” (Coles 1987, 251; cf. Sharples 1991b). The structure of these settlements, particular Meare, therefore may have been less rigid than the enclosures discussed above, reflecting a more fluid sense of community and boundedness occupied by a loose social unit of artisans compared with the potential well defined (genealogically, socially and physically) of communities/households elsewhere.

#### *5.2.4 Bounding the unenclosed*

Much has been made of the difference between enclosed and unenclosed (e.g. Hingley 1984a, b, 1990b). However, many so-called unenclosed sites were partaking in a number of processes of bounding their community from others and/or the landscape. The evidence of individual enclosures around roundhouses has already been mentioned. Elsewhere, some unenclosed sites may have been ‘bounded’ by natural features. At Glastonbury the settlement was situated within a wet area, permanently waterlogged rather than marshy (Coles and Minnit 1995, 136), potentially creating a sense of both boundedness and accessibility. On other low-lying settlements, such as parts of the Claydon Pike complex (Fig. 5.2.4.1), situated on dry gravel islands almost completely bounded by marshy, wet areas, may have emphasised boundedness, particular in wet periods, similar to enclosure ditches elsewhere. We should be careful, therefore, to accept that unenclosed sites may have had similar processes of boundary which

may have taken other natural or only semi-artificial form and that the conceptual differences should, in some cases at least, not be over emphasised.

### *5.2.5 Division of space in 'hillforts' and larger enclosures*

The very partial excavation of most hillforts in the study area makes examination of the use of space difficult. In addition, the early date of many of the excavations of the larger sites, such as Salmonsbury, Leckhampton, Bredon, Bagendon and Midsummer Hill has often resulted in a lack of attention to details of context, making analysis difficult. Division can be made in terms of chronology.

#### *5.2.5.1 Early Iron Age*

The large size of early hillforts compared with the small areas excavated on most sites make study of the use of space on such sites difficult. Only a few larger enclosures of EIA date have been investigated, including Norbury-Northleach and Crickley Hill. The change in settlement architecture and spatial layout at Crickley Hill<sup>41</sup> represents an important case study in the reasons and meaning of such changes. The internal organisation appears to have changed radically between the two main phases. The earlier of these comprised rectangular buildings which were deemed to be domestic structures rather than all four posterns (Dixon 1976; Moore 2003). Hierarchical differentiation in the earlier phase is less obvious than in the latter phases. However, one of the rectangular buildings (A5) in Phase 1 is slightly larger than the others and appears to be situated slightly across the line of the main road in to and through the interior (Dixon 1973, 17). Differences in house size and form have been identified as indicating status on continental sites which at present represent the best parallels for the Crickley buildings. Apart from this most of the structures seem relatively similar and their layout behind the rampart aligned along the road appears to indicate little evidence of apparent hierarchy.

Philip Dixon (*pers comm*) has also claimed the existence of a communal cooking area from phase 1 represented by a scoop roughly 3m in diameter related to mound of burnt stone and animal remains, situated to the rear of the main row of rectangular buildings. This possible communal eating area, may have had similar roles to the LBA/EIA midden sites (Ch.6), both potentially suggesting a lack of defined hierarchy and as such has wider implications for the nature of social organisation on LBA/EIA enclosures. It suggests that the hearths visible in

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<sup>41</sup> I am grateful to Dr. Philip Dixon for information on the unpublished material from the interior at Crickley Hill.

the rectangular structures was not the primary place for food preparation as often assumed in Iron Age architecture (cf. Bruck and Goodman 1999, 7). Instead, food preparation may have been more communal or alternatively represent communal feasting.

The second phase of the hillfort contrasts the first phase with a large circular structure, with a west facing doorway, immediately behind the rampart and placed directly over the earlier roadway. This is surrounded by smaller circular structures with an apparent ring of 4 post structures beyond them. The organisation can be interpreted in a number of ways as a hierarchy on the settlement. A somewhat similar arrangement can be seen at Hucclecote (See 5.2.3.1; Thomas *et al* 2003) and stresses that if representing hierarchy on the settlement such hierarchy was not restricted purely to hilltop enclosures. Alternatively, considering both the unusual size and doorway orientation of the house at Crickley it might better be regarded as having another function and the arrangement may also suggest some cosmological references. Dixon (*pers. comm*) has noted that the cobbled track into the interior deviates around the roundhouse in order to reach the other houses and to be able to enter the main building. This cobbling follows a clockwise direction which reflects the suggested clockwise movement around circular houses (Fitzpatrick 1994; Parker-Pearson 1996; Giles and Parker-Pearson 1999). This also reflects the approach to the Bronze Age monuments elsewhere on the site which show similar evidence of wear indicting particular approach and movement around the structure.

In both phases it is notable that the area occupied by the Neolithic enclosure was generally absent of Iron Age buildings in both phases (Dixon 1973; 1976; *pers. comm.*) despite this appearing to be where one would expect the main focus of the site to be. The suggestion is that the area had another use or was respected in some similarities with the arrangement of the unenclosed LBA site at Shorncliffe discussed above where earlier monuments were also avoided. This stresses directly the role of earlier monuments in the cognitive framework of Iron Age societies (Gosden and Lock 1998; Bruck and Goodman 1999, 9) and emphasises that such features were acknowledged and often respected in some ways. Crickley and Shorncliffe stress that it was not just the contemporary social organisation that dictated the layout of settlement space but also reference to past use of the landscape and symbolic or ancestral concerns.

Evidence from other EIA hillforts includes Norbury, which has 4 post (or longer) structures representing either rows of granaries or aisled domestic structures similar to those at Crickley (Moore 2003). Elsewhere the dominance of rectangular structures, at EIA-MIA hillforts like Credenhill and Midsummer Hill has been interpreted as placing an emphasis on storage

(Cunliffe 1991), although the possibility that some may have represented larger domestic structures (Stanford 1970) cannot be entirely dismissed. Fieldwalking from Burhill (Marshall 1989) has produced EIA material from outside the ramparts suggesting that some activity took place beyond the enclosure boundary. The evidence from Burhill is enigmatic, either implying an unenclosed phase to the site or extra-mural activity. Of EIA sites in the south so little had been excavated of the interior little can be said of organisation, although the impression from many of the larger sites like Bathampton is of limited interior structures. Scant evidence exists on EIA larger enclosures to enable detailed reconstruction of the layout of these settlements. The dominance of rectangular post-built structures may imply a focus on storage activities on these sites, as suggested by Cunliffe (1991) for those in Wessex. On the limited evidence however, it is difficult to make such a broad conclusion, and in many cases rectilinear buildings may have been domestic structures.

#### *5.2.5.2 Later Iron Age*

Of later Iron Age sites variation is also most apparent. The layout of the smaller hillfort at Conderton, for example, may bare better comparison with other smaller enclosure like Frocester. The method of excavation at Conderton, focusing on box excavation of the visible hut circles, was unable to give determine the extent of any internal division. Pits were found throughout the site but the geophysics (Thomas *forthcoming*, fig 5) implies some division of the structures on the site between the SE and NW sides with more evidence for circular structures on the SE side and pits the other, although the picture is far from clear.

The blocking of the 'rear' (NE) entrance in the later phases of the site, reinforced a similarity to other enclosures, which rarely have opposed entrances (Chapter 4). This cross wall appears very similar to that seen at the NE entrance at Salmonsbury (Dunning 1976, Fig 10). The latter is dated by Dunning to the Roman period, although the accuracy of this date may be questionable considering the poor understanding and identification of stratigraphic relationships. The blocking of entrances at larger enclosures has been noted elsewhere. This has often been interpreted as local reaction to circumstances and often a desire for more restricted access, usually related to increasing social instability. However, elsewhere the blocking of entrances has been regarded as a symbolic act. It is notable that earlier sites in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium seem to have greater tendency towards multiple, often opposing, entrances (see Hill 1996). At a number of sites these are later blocked to retain a single access, the most notable example being Danebury (Cunliffe and Poole 1991, 236), taking place around 300BC. The change at Danebury also represents a limited change in the layout

of the settlement, with a shift of dominance of domestic structures in the southern half and storage structures (?), reversed in the later phase.

The blocked entrance at Danebury also faced south west, retaining the east facing entrance. A similar shift occurs at Conderton and Salmonsbury where it is the northerly entrances that are blocked leaving access only through the south and south east entrances. It is potentially significant that at both sites the cross walls are insubstantial and not a large rampart construction. This may suggest the blocking of these entrances had less to do with an increasing need for defence but more to do with symbolic concerns and/or control over access to the site. It is not clear at Salmonsbury and Conderton whether the changes to the entrances marked shifts in the settlement layout. However, the blocking of the entrances do mark a move to restricted access through the settlement. The tendency at settlements to close the non south/south east entrances may reflect the apparent growing concern with south east entrances for enclosures of all sizes (see Ch. 4) and domestic structures (see below).

The morphologically very different Bredon Hill also suggests that entrance location was particularly important to the structure of the settlement. There is evidence of a (Bronze) metalworking hut situated close to the early entrance to the site. It is perhaps significant that the entrance was later moved and redirected over this hut (Hencken 1938, Plate XXI and XVII). Hingley (1997, 12) has noted the location of metalworking on the peripheries of settlements which he suggests has cosmological or 'regenerative' roles (See Ch. 7). The redirection of the entrance way over this hut may further support such suggestions stressing the relationship between metalworking transformation processes and liminal locations.

Excavation on most southern hillforts of the later period has concentrated on rampart excavation or very small areas of the interior making re-constructing even vaguely the nature of site layout extremely difficult. The variation in features recorded by the test pits at Burlledge Camp [133], indicates that some areas of such sites were less densely occupied by structures of any kind and may have been reserved for animals etc.

#### ***5.2.5.3 Late Iron Age large enclosures***

The small excavation area at Bagendon makes detailed analysis of site layout difficult yet some suggestion can be made about the nature and meaning of spatial arrangements. The area excavated by Clifford (1961) and Trow (1980; unpublished) indicated an industrial area close to entrances situated around a roadway leading in to the 'interior' of the complex (Fig. 6.1.4.5). Such a layout is known at continental Oppida, such as Bibracte/Mont Beuvray,

Burgundy (Collis 1984). Beyond this observation little can be said about the nature of other activity across the site, except that whilst much of the interior was probably unoccupied by built structures (Trow unpub; Darvill 1987, 168), it seems unlikely that activity was restricted to just the entrance area. The presence of possible cremation burials near Bagendon church/rectory (see 5.5.10) which appear to be the focus of the site and may hint at a potential sanctuary or shrine in this area, and would reflect the focus of other, potentially similar sites, at Bibracte (Collis 1984) and Camulodunum/Colchester (Haselgrove 1995). The area around the present Church is also known to be extremely wet and prone to flooding<sup>42</sup>. The importance of wet areas for sanctuary practices may also be significant and has been suggested as a focus for other 'oppida' (Haselgrove 2001; Haselgrove and Millett 1997, 281; Bryant *forthcoming*). The role of some such sites as communal meeting places (Millett and Haselgrove 1997, 285; Crumley 2003, 7) may also relate directly to roles as sanctuaries and industrial/exchange centres (similar in some respects to sites like Glastonbury).

The relation of the other enclosures at Duntisbourne and Ditches needs further analysis in relation to the industrial areas. Previous assessment of the site (Trow unpub; 1988) has tended to regard the Ditches enclosure as central to the site; implicitly as a 'keep' to the Bagendon's 'bailey'. This doesn't entirely fit the evidence and suggests a central and monarchical role for both sites that may be inaccurate. However, Trow was correct in seeing the inter-relation between these sites, a relationship which is key in understanding the nature of occupation at these sites. Further examination of the role of the sites at Duntisbourne is important in assessing their relation to the Ditches. The presence of imported Terra Nigra and Rubra at both sites implies some status for both suggesting that Ditches cannot necessarily be regarded as the focus of the complex.

Despite the partial examination of the interior at Salmonsbury there is clear evidence of internal divisions on the site. Rather than being the clear division between East/West in terms of separation of housing and storage, as appears to have been the case at Danebury, there appears to be separation of distinct areas in to particular areas for households or activity areas, for example, the location of two roundhouses in a distinct conjoined enclosure (Fig 5.3.1.2; Dunning 1976, fig 2). The purpose of this conjoining of structures in the same defined space is unclear but may suggest that similar activities took place within them or that they represented a socially exclusive group, such as an extended family. What is striking is the similarity with arrangements of structures at unenclosed sites, such as Claydon and Cannard's

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<sup>42</sup> From *History of Bagendon Church* (anon, unpub) which notes flooding of the church as high as a metre in Medieval and Post Medieval period leading to the raising of the chancel. This area has also been incredibly wet in more recent wet summers and winters.

Grave (Fig. 5.3.1.2). This may imply that the nature of the sites is not as distinct as may at first appear and that similar purposes of settlement division took place on both sites.

Elsewhere on the settlement other larger internal divisions can be seen with the rectilinear enclosure abutting the external ditch at site III (Dunning 1976, fig 5), possibly defining a distinct activity zone and another surrounding a circular structure at site IV (*ibid*, fig. 8). The social implication may be that space within such a large 'enclosure' was internally divided although but not necessarily on formal lines, as seen on some continental sites like Villeneuve-St-Germain (Fig.6.1.4.11; e.g. Collis 1984; Buchenshutz 1995), but with the piecemeal division of household and activity areas from the rest of the 'interior' potentially suggesting that different groups were working and living in separate areas.

The use of space at Salmonsbury may be matched by the later or LIA sites at Uley Bury and Dyke hills with similar internal enclosures suggestive of communities within the wider enclosure defining themselves from each other and/or the use of separate spaces for distinct activities. The best parallels for such use of space can be found in northern French oppida such as Villeneuve-St-Germain and Condé-sur-Suippe where space was divided into separate communities (Haselgrove 1995; 1996) and, to some extent, Silchester (Fulford 1987; Haselgrove 1995, 86). Such a division of space is familiar on many LIA 'oppida' in Europe including for example Manching, Germany and Hrazany, Bohemia (Collis 1984; Fichtl 2000, 84) and been interpreted as independent social (probably) household units operating within a wider community. Salmonsbury and Bagendon, therefore, have very different uses of social space reflecting their potentially very different roles within wider social and settlement patterns and in the nature of the communities they represent (further discussed in Ch. 6 and 8).

### **5.3. Circular structures: form, size and implications for social organisation (Appendix 4)**

Recent analyses of late prehistoric buildings have stressed the relationship between roundhouse form and size with social organisation and perceptions of social space (Parker-Pearson 1996; Oswald 1997; Pope 2003). Analysis of the settlement layout therefore cannot ignore the nature and changes in building form. For this reason, all circular buildings from the region were examined to detect regional and chronological patterns and changes in the study area. Such patterns may reflect patterns in attitudes to space and social organisation.

Previous discussions of roundhouses have suggested that size may relate to chronology with larger houses in earlier 1<sup>st</sup> millennium and smaller from later in the Iron Age (Haselgrove *et al* 2001). If such patterns do exist these may have huge implications on social nature of the communities inhabiting such structures and the role of house form in reflecting social changes cannot be underestimated (cf. Deetz 1977; Webley *forthcoming*).

There are a number of methodological problems in examining circular structures. Dating of many houses is often difficult with many producing little dating evidence, whilst relating structures to the rest of the settlement, particularly within enclosures, is also problematic. For these reasons only a general chronological and regional picture of the patterns in structural forms can be made.

### 5.3.1 Chronological differences

The sample of houses from the study area was divided into broad chronological groups to facilitate analysis of general trends in construction techniques through the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium. These were the LBA/EIA (roughly 900BC-400/300BC), MIA/LIA (from 400/300BC-0BC) and a separate phase for LIA (which included structures from 0BC-100AD). In addition, circular structures are well known from the region and beyond dating to the Roman period (e.g. Birdlip House (Mudd *et al* 1999); whilst these are not included in the analysis, they may indicate a continuing building tradition in the region.

180 circular structures were identified<sup>43</sup>. The small sample cannot be regarded as a defined statistical group for which one must wait for larger analyses, such as that undertaken for northern Britain (Pope 2003) but yet to be done for southern Britain. Despite inadequacies of the data set, general trends may be useful in comparing with changes in settlement form and patterning.

Of the 57 structures of LBA and EIA date the vast majority are post built (Fig. 5.3.1.1). This trend is somewhat skewed by the large number of LBA structures from Shorncote which provides 41 of these structures and also the only early gully structures from the study area proper. Other sites with examples of early post-built structures include Hucclecote, Crickley Hill, Thornwell, Roughground Farm, and Butlers Field. To this picture could possibly be added the post built structure at The Park<sup>44</sup> depending on how early one regards the date of

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<sup>43</sup> Including examples from Cadbury Castle, to the south of the study area, as comparison

<sup>44</sup> included with MIA/LIA

the site based on the C14 date. The structures at Groundwell West<sup>45</sup>, are also difficult to place, dated early to MIA (Walker *et al* 2001) whilst its structures (all gully built) are perhaps better related to the later Iron Age tradition. The pattern of a tendency toward post built early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium structures reflects the pattern seen in the Thames valley (e.g. Allen *et al* 1984, Moore and Jennings 1992) and has been suggested for other areas of southern Britain (e.g. Martin 1999, 69).

Middle to LIA circular structures vary greater in structural technique than earlier examples. However, there is a tendency towards 'gully' structures, either as drainage gullies or wall slots. Where post built structures do exist, and they remain common, they are often situated within drainage gullies as at Hallen, Salmonsbury and Claydon Pike representing a departure from early sites like Shorncote where such drainage gullies are absent (Fig. 5.3.1.2).

LIA and early Roman structures vary widely in building form. They include the some what unusual stone built structures from Bagendon and a single example from Salmonsbury, which can be best paralleled by the 4<sup>th</sup> –2<sup>nd</sup> century BC examples from Conderton (Fig. 5.3.1.3). These are matched by a continued tradition of stone built roundhouses in the Roman period seen at Birdlip, dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (Mudd *et al* 1999), and the possible Roman (or even Iron Age examples) from Barnsley Villa<sup>46</sup>.

Chronological patterns cannot be discerned in doorway orientation, particularly as large numbers of structures do not have visible entrances. There are some possible patterns in size variation (Fig 5.3.1.4). There is a general tendency towards smaller houses in all periods and the pattern suggested from some other studies of larger earlier Iron Age houses is not striking in the region. LIA structures do appear to be smaller, however, with all structures from Bagendon, for example, below 8m in diameter. In addition, there is a possibly slight tendency towards larger houses in the earlier period, although again the trend is not huge. Shorncote, in contrast, indicates mostly small size (under 8m), with the two exceptions unlikely to represent buildings. A more notable apparent chronological difference in circular structures in the region appears to be a possible shift from post built structures to those situated within drainage or eaves-drip gullies. This may be tied in to the apparent trend seen in settlement layout towards more internal divisions within settlement and clear divisions between

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<sup>45</sup> included with LBA/EIA.

<sup>46</sup> The structures from Barnsley Villa are clearly not animal pens (Webster 1982) and should be reinterpreted as dry stone circular houses. Their date is unclear (dated as early 2<sup>nd</sup> C AD by Webster) but similarity to the recently excavated dry stone built roundhouse at Birdlip, securely of 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD date, may suggest a similar date for them. However, the Iron Age material found at Barnsley and near by banjo enclosures (Ch.4) cannot rule out a possible Iron Age date.

structures and the rest of the settlement or landscape (see above). It may relate back to the possible trend seen in settlement layouts (above) where houses within settlement become situated on the same spot, marking more sedentary occupation and the attendant need for greater drainage for example. This may be part of a social change for some buildings to have more defined structures. This trend may also indicate a widespread change in building techniques between the earlier and later period reflecting broader changes in the nature of settlement and social organisation.

### **5.3.2 Entrance orientation**

Orientation of door ways to circular structures has been regarded as important in the Iron Age imbued with cosmological references in addition to, or instead of, any functional purposes (Fitzpatrick 1994; Oswald 1997). In order to examine the role of structures in relation to social organisation and understandings of space house orientation was examined.

110 out of 180 circular structures provided evidence of entrance orientation. House orientation of all circular structures recovered in the study area show a general preference to the South East (44%) (Fig. 5.3.1.5)<sup>47</sup>. This generally reflects other regional studies (Hill 1996; Jackson 1999b), although in Wessex, East has been suggested as more important (Hill 1996, 108), and the impression from briefer regional surveys (Allen *et al* 1984; Hingley 1996) of the surrounding regions, which show an east or south east preference. However, within the overall picture a number of sites show evidence of large-scale rejection of the south east 'norm' with a significant number of westerly facing structures. It is notable that other orientations all have significant numbers, all appearing as equally popular. Only a single structure shows evidence of multiple entrances, at Claydon Pike, with entrances to the SE and W although the outer enclosure for house 2 at Groundwell Farm includes a secondary entrance to the north east and a west entrance to the structure at Mingies Ditch (Allen and Robinson 1993).

It is of interest that a number of sites in the region with well preserved round house structures have significant numbers of houses which do not face south east, the suggested norm for southern Britain (Oswald 1997). At Conderton, where door orientation could be discerned, for three houses, two faced north whilst the other faced south. Other sites show a large number of structures disregarding the east/south east preference; the main roundhouse at Crickley faces west (Dixon 1976) and at least one example from Salmonsbury has an entrance gap on the

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<sup>47</sup> Although it should be noted this figure is somewhat dominated by structures from Shorncliffe (41) and Glastonbury (24).

north west side. This pattern is most obviously seen at Glastonbury where the vast majority of houses indicate non-south east orientation (Fig. 5.3.1.6), with predominance to the south west<sup>48</sup>.

This pattern may be regionalised within the study area. Notwithstanding the small sample, sites in the northern part of the study area seem to show greater emphasis on a south east orientation (particularly in the upper Thames valley) in contrast to a slightly more diverse range of orientation in the south of the region (Fig. 5.3.1.7). This pattern may indicate that previous studies of house orientation (e.g. Oswald 1997) have focused on certain areas of the country, such as Wessex, or biased by particular sites (Oswald by Moel-y-Gaer), and that orientation varied on a regional basis, a pattern suggested by more recent regional studies (Pope 2003). Jackson's (1999b, fig. 9.5) examination of Marches circular structures also indicates a significant number of west facing structures and, alongside this study, may imply a regional tradition in western Britain. Such regional deviation has also been suggested in other parts of Britain, away from Wessex (Hingley *et al* 1997, 459).

The extent to which house orientation differences at sites such as Glastonbury and Conderton represent deliberate 'rejection' of a south easterly norm is unclear. On sites where an easterly/south easterly orientation is dominant, such as Frocester, the presence of a single example in an opposing (in this case northerly direction) may be explained by particular functions for that structure. These might include 'ritual' purposes (perhaps suggested for the Frocester structure- see above) or non-habitational, where the requirement for SE facing entrance for light or cosmological beliefs was less important<sup>49</sup>. Parker-Pearson has suggested that west facing entrances are related to ideological concepts of back, dark and death (Parker-Pearson and Richards 1994; Parker-Pearson 1996; Woodward and Hill 2000, 115) which might be used to imply those houses (or their occupants) with western doorways had some distinct roles or functions. In contrast, Pope (2003) has recently suggested that diversions from south east orientation are more likely to relate to local variations in topography and wind direction. Evidence from Crickley in particular may indicate the complexity of such factors and that door orientation cannot be argued either as always cosmological or functional. Crickley seemingly shows wear around the south of the house (P.Dixon *pers comm*) indicating

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<sup>48</sup> Note the number of structures at Glastonbury includes only those from each approx. phase indicated by Coles and Minnit (1995). Therefore, it is not an entirely accurate reflection of the total numbers of houses that existed. However, it does provide a good impression of the general trend in entrance orientation.

<sup>49</sup> One may also have suggested a chronological factor but evidence from the study area (at least) suggests that house orientation does not appear to have been chronologically determined. There is no evidence, for instance, that LBA houses were orientated South, for example, as is often suggested (Oswald 1997).

particular movement around the building. In addition, its differential size, acting as the focus of the building, implies that the different doorway entrance reflects a distinct function from the smaller roundhouses, be that as a result of ritual, status or as a communal structure. Its view, facing the bank of the Neolithic camp with the Malvern Hills behind, may further indicate a specific role for the structure associated with this view.

If any of these explanations is correct they each have important, and differing, implications for settlement organisation and concepts of space. A deliberate rejection of the 'norm' by some sites may indicate their participation in distinct practices or a conscious effort to display their difference to other communities. The fact that Glastonbury appears to be situated in a 'marginal'<sup>50</sup> location and involved in distinct production and exchange activities (see Ch.6), may reinforce the idea of non- SE entrances as somehow against the norm. Perhaps, more likely, it reflects local trends and differences in the region, which may be related to complex combination of localised concepts of space and building tradition and illustrate the diversity in house form and orientation which is so often underplayed (e.g. Oswald 1997; Giles and Parker-Pearson 1999).

### *5.3.3. Rebuilding and continuity*

To what extent settlements remained static for long periods or shifted across the landscape, as suggested for sites such as Claydon Pike, has important social implications. Do we see a sedentary occupation or more fluid attitude to settlement location? Structures on settlements are integral to any such discussion. Evidence for rebuilding or lack of may suggest how long enclosures were occupied. It is essential, therefore, to assess how often buildings appear to have been replaced and whether chronological patterns exist.

Examination of this process, however, is not straightforward. Rebuilding phases are often difficult to identify and the often ephemeral nature of many building forms means that many structures and structural sequences are missed. The life span of timber buildings and the extent to which modification and rebuilding can prolong life span are also controversial. Because of these problems, and the limited data set available only general observations can be made but these may be useful in indicating the social implications of house rebuilding on a number of sites.

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<sup>50</sup> Perhaps in social rather than resources terms

There are a number of examples where houses were rebuilt more than once on the same spot. At Frocester, structure 7 indicates at least two separate phases and possibly more. Structures at Glastonbury show evidence that floors were re-laid a considerable number of times (Coles and Minnit 1995, 106), although the lifetime of each phase is difficult to establish and how often a floor renewal was required in such an environment is not entirely clear. It does, however, seem clear that each clay floor did not represent a rebuilding phase. Site 2 at Beckford (1974) also shows the rebuilding of a structure a considerable number of times, with as many as seven different phases possible within as little as a century. Elsewhere, at sites such as Groundwell Farm and Mingies Ditch there is evidence of shifting of the main structure, rebuilt in different phases.

The pattern of rebuilding houses on the same location may not be an entirely late phenomenon. It has been suggested that the arrangement of posts indicate a rebuilding phase at Roughground Farm (Allen *et al* 1993, 40) and at Shorncote (see above). Other sites with rebuilding are uncertain. It is always possible that the buildings from Shorncote represent a single (or couple) of houses shifting across the area rather than a larger community and may explain the lack of obvious multiple phases to the structures. This may indicate a different attitude towards structures and their placement with rebuilding of a new structure in different locations as the norm rather than modification or rebuilding on the same spot.

Because of these inherent difficulties it is even more difficult to draw social inferences from these processes. One might suggest that there is greater evidence amongst later houses for rebuilding and multiple phase structures at the same location. This picture is probably masked, however, by the limited information on earlier houses. A distinction should also perhaps be drawn between rebuilding within a larger enclosure with movement of the structure, as seen at Groundwell Farm and possibly Frocester, and the constant re-building of a structure over the remains of earlier buildings as surely evidenced at Beckford I (Oswald 1974).

To what extent can we claim each of these processes had meaningful, social implications or reflected pragmatic needs and functional requirements? The extraction pits at House 3 at Groundwell Farm, for example, and the new position of the subsequent structure may indicate the deliberate dismantling of the earlier building. These timbers may have been used in the next structure, perhaps entailing rebuilding of the structure at the same time, enforcing the need to shift slightly the building location. This processes itself may have had social implications, potentially inferring the earlier house was deconstructed and rebuilt well in advance of structural requirements. This might imply the need to rebuild the house for

purposes other than the decay of the earlier structure. One might suggest a change in the head of household, structure of the household (marriage for example), changing 'fashion' or functional requirements. Groundwell Farm is especially interesting in this respect with the radically different house forms with each phase. These radically different phases could reflect the affirming of a new head of the family with new building form potentially marking and expressing newly found status both to the household and wider society. Gerritsen (1998; 2003) and Webley (*forthcoming*) have convincingly indicated how a change in the nature of houses in Denmark and the low-countries indicates a shift in the social organisation of the household. Such processes may be more evident in the structural sequences of many British houses than is usually accepted.

The movement of rebuilt structures may also be important. At Groundwell, Frocester and, further afield, at Mingies Ditch there appears to be some evidence to suggest the deliberate movement around the interior of the enclosure over time. Allen has suggested a clockwise movement for the main structure at Mingies for example (Hingley and Miles 1984; Allen and Robinson 1993). A similar process may explain the apparent movement of structure at other sites. The reason for this movement may be explained by utilising of fresh ground space or building requirements (as suggested above) or some cosmological reference. There is no evidence for the latter, however, and the imprecise dating for most phases may suggest that the processes of structures shifting around settlements was far more haphazard than a clockwise model suggests, although the process suggested for Groundwell may also have required house shift as part of these social processes.

These processes, and their relation to social implications, require further study using far larger data sets and it is hoped current research will shed further light on such processes (e.g. Pope 2003). There is a general impression however that MIA sites, particularly in enclosures, show greater evidence for rebuilding and refurbishment of the main structure on the site. This longevity and complexity of occupation suggest a firm relationship with these particular locales in the landscape. The complexity of rebuilding phases of houses alongside possible enclosure modification, for example the re-cutting of enclosure ditches and multivallation, may reflect complex social processes within these groups, particularly changes in their structure (marriage, coming of age, death) or relations with other communities (status, wealth, alliance, kin relations) which we can only begin to tease out from the structural record.

## **5.4 Discussion**

The analysis of the use of space and form of settlements raises a number of issues and observations on the nature of Iron Age communities and possible wider social changes taking place over the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. Analysis of the layout of settlements seems to suggest that no obvious hierarchy exists on or between settlements. Few settlements show direct indication of hierarchy on settlement, either on larger enclosures or smaller enclosed and unenclosed sites. This may reflect the macro scale observations where no obvious hierarchical settlement pattern is apparent and may suggest as Ferrell has inferred for north eastern England (1995, 136) that there was no obvious ruling class with control over land distribution or tenure or that hierarchy was not displayed physically in the landscape.

The analysis of settlements in the region suggests that wider social changes may have taken place over the Iron Age. Despite the differences in settlement form and layout a number of broader patterns emerge particularly that later Iron Age settlements show greater emphasis on internal division, dividing space internally and from each other. This process may suggest wider social changes or changes in the perceptions of space that went beyond changes on individual settlements but reflect the concerns of wider society. There is some indication that this process was one that took place across the region from the around the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium onwards and may be part of other changes in social structure, population size, exchange systems and settlement patterns on a larger, inter-regional scale. There is enough evidence to imply that the division of space within later Iron Age large enclosures differed markedly from that on earlier sites. Early sites appear to show little explicit division of space, where it did exist it appears to have been one between storage and domestic dwelling. To the extreme, if we refute that any of the rectilinear structures at Crickley, Norbury or Midsummer Hill are domestic but are 'four-posters' then we may accept the argument that these sites were focused on storage as their main function (Cunliffe 1991, 347). This would take that division of domestic versus storage to extremes, showing a conscious decision to divide the two to the greatest extent.

Later sites, as far as can be assessed from the limited evidence, appear to contrast with this picture. Not only do these sites appear to contain a more diverse array of structures (and presumably activities) within the interior, these later sites appear to show evidence of defined enclosures and separation of structures and activity areas from other parts of the settlement. Although Salmonsbury is an excavated example, aerial photos of Uley Bury hillfort (Fig. 5.4.1; Hampton and Palmer 1977) and Dyke Hills (Hingley and Miles 1984), to the east of the study area, show similar division and are likely both to date to the last centuries BC. The roles of these internal divisions may represent separate activity areas or the distinction of separate

social groups. Either way, they indicate a desire to exclude/include people and activities from other areas, activities and/or people within the wider community.

This division may reflect a wider trend seen across other settlement forms in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium. Evidence emerges from all forms of settlement, rectilinear and other enclosures, unenclosed settlements and hillforts of the increasing desire to define separate spaces in the settlement. Within this growing desire for defined, separated space for the domestic unit (the household) and activity areas a number of broad divisions can be seen. Most apparent is the concern to keep such division of activity and domestic units within a larger enclosed sphere. This may be seen on one scale at the hillfort like Salmonsbury and smaller scale of enclosures like Frocester where internal divisions exist within the larger defined space of the enclosure.

In contrast, settlements such as The Park, Cribbs Causeway and Butcombe represent a different use of space. Here access is less restricted with the possibility to enter the site without a wider barrier and sometimes from separate entrances. Access is possible to non-habitation areas without encroaching on the prime domestic area. At The Park, for instance, access to the rear 'paddock' can be gained through the parallel trackway. In all cases, however, the presumed prime domestic structure is situated within its defined enclosure access to which must be chosen and may require access through other non-habitation areas, as can be seen at both Cribbs and The Park. These differences may represent purely regional building traditions but also reflect different concerns in spatial use. With the first group, enclosure indicates concern with the domestic structure as a prime unit in the settlement and that distinction from the exterior was defined in a single feature- the boundary ditch. The second surely implies less concern with division from the exterior but concern to maintain division between separate working areas.

The similarity between the two comes in the clear concern to maintain the separation and distinction of the main structure usually regarded as the main domestic dwelling. Even on truly unenclosed sites there appears often a drive to maintain the distinction of particular structure from other structures, possibly those used for other activities or for other social units. This appears to mark a break with earlier settlements where such a concern for division is less apparent. It seems that by the later Iron Age communities had an increasing desire to define areas of activity from each other; domestic from other activity, and to define themselves from other social units, be it within a settlement complex or from communities further afield. The reasons for this change are discussed further in Chapter 8 but they may relate to increased concern for land tenure and changes in the social make up of communities;

placing greater emphasis on the smaller extended household (kin group) at the expense of larger social units.

The division of space *within* the settlement should not be underestimated. Whilst Hingley (1984; see Fig. 5.1.1.3) drew social inferences from the division of settlements from one another, the division of the space within settlements reveals that Hingley's dichotomy is not so clear cut and this has implications for how individuals moved about their settlement, where they undertook activities and importantly how they regarded each other as individuals and as households.

This change in perception need not mean a complete change in social form or that EIA communities did not value social exclusion or identify differences between households or kin groups. It also does not imply that early settlements did not differentiate separate activity areas and evidence for such division is indicated from some sites, such as Shorncote. The shift between the use of space on early and later settlement is in how such separations are expressed. In the later period any divisions that may have existed in the earlier period now needed to be physically and unquestionably expressed in the form of large enclosure ditches or other divisions. This must surely mark a radical change in communities' perceptions of the space around them and of each other.

Analysis of later Iron Age enclosures also provides a window on the nature of contemporary social organisation. Alongside the internal divisions seen on some large LIA enclosures and within the unenclosed complexes it is apparent that internal division of enclosures was also fundamental. Apart from perhaps Frocester, there is insufficient evidence to suggest such internal divisions represent discrete household groups within the same enclosure. This may be partly a product of excavation strategies; however work at other enclosures, such as Mingies Ditch and Groundwell Farm suggests the movement of the house around the internal space rather than different groups. Whilst this may be the case at Frocester it seems less likely and we may have discreet groups marking a larger community than that seen in other enclosures.

There is also growing evidence from cropmarks and excavation that later Iron Age enclosures were often part of wider complexes of enclosures, either conjoined as at Frocester and Birdlip or part of wider clusters (see in Chapter 6). Elsewhere, there is evidence of features beyond the bounds of the enclosure such as the pits at Guiting power and possible features visible at Lower Barn (Marshall 2001) and Cold Aston (Marshall 1999). In both cases this has important implications: blurring the idea of distinguishing between internal and external space

and seeing enclosures as part of wider activity and social spaces and, potentially, communities.

The social unit represented at such enclosures is potentially diverse. Most appear to be occupied by small household units whilst others, such as Frocester, seem likely to represent an extended group, perhaps a wider kin group. The implications, although difficult to establish are important and can be compared with social analyses elsewhere in southern Britain and northern Europe. In the low countries, Gerritsen (1998; 2003) has postulated new family units moving and setting up house elsewhere in the EIA with a change to more sedentary social units in the later Iron Age. Within the region we seem to have a similar move to relatively fixed communities within the landscape some of which may have comprised extended groups of (presumably) kin related households then we have wider social units. The larger agglomerations represent part of spreads of wider, kin related units. In such circumstances the nature of relations expressed by 'enclosing' boundaries takes on entirely new meanings: defining space but not social or even kin exclusivity.

The longevity of occupation of many enclosures is also important in determining social organisation. Whilst the chronology is frequently imprecise (Chapter 3), most appear to be occupied for at least a matter of centuries and a site like Frocester potentially continuously from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC in to the Roman period. Such longevity of occupation in one place implies the stability of these social units in the landscape; perhaps at odds with earlier Iron Age settlement. This is not to say that all enclosures were occupied continuously and some 'shifting' is evident; for example from The Park to The Bowsings, then subsequently abandoned around the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Marshall 1995) and at Birdlip where a shift from one enclosure to another near by (potentially without the hiatus suggested by Parry 1998a). In both cases however the shift is possibly localized and at least at Birdlip need not represent a drastic social change. Such stability of occupation may imply a number of things about communities; their association with a relatively stable land tenure and that these household units or kin groups reproduced themselves in the same location. It is tempting to see, at least in the enclosures of the Cotswolds and Severn and (north) Avon valleys, a similar move to more stable sedentary settlement and social organisation in the later Iron Age to that suggested by Gerritsen (1998). This is not to argue that the social unit was 'fixed' within this landscape. We can still visualize negotiation over land rights and the abandonment and creation of new settlements with the rise and fall of family units but in some areas, at least, there appears over the later Iron Age a growing affirmation by communities (comprised primarily of extended households) of their spatial and social place in the landscape.

It is difficult to determine building phases on these enclosures; recutting of ditches seems particularly problematic: whilst recuts may indicate major restructuring of the enclosure we can surely envisage periodic ditch cleaning over occupation difficult to see in the archaeological record. With the switch to new households there does not appear to be a dramatic need for a shift in settlement location or restructuring of the settlement, although elements such as houses may have been rebuilt in different locations (see above) and the multivallation of some enclosures may relate to such restructuring or increased status (cf. Wigley *forthcoming b*). Tentatively then we can visualize enclosures occupied by (sometimes extended) household units, relatively stable in the landscape – fixed and interacting with other similar social units.

Alongside the emergence of enclosures is a seemingly matched desire by other forms of settlement, including later Iron Age ‘hillforts’ or large enclosures and so-called ‘unenclosed’ settlements, to define distinct houses and separate space within wider social, settlement, activity areas. This kind of division and combining of roundhouses in distinct enclosed areas is seen at a range of sites and suggests the need to define space from other area. In some cases, particular at Claydon Pike this appears to be beyond any functional requirements. Also in larger communities; within a large enclosed space we see a similar need to define distinct areas and a growing emphasis on defining space even within communities which are either essentially unenclosed or already defined by an external boundary. Whilst in some cases this may be explained as relating to status: distinguishing chieftain residences, for example<sup>51</sup>, it might be better regarded as a more widespread requirement in the later Iron Age to define social and domestic space. To take the argument to extremes, and speculate within the terms of medieval and post-medieval building changes (Deetz 1977; Johnson 1996), we might regard it as an increased sense of ‘privacy’ or individualisation. Using such terms is obviously problematic but provides a useful analogy for potential social changes between the early and later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. This need not mean that groups were socially exclusive, as seemingly suggested by Hingley (1984a), but that potentially an increasing complex and wider social network (evidenced potentially by the growing role of regional pottery, querns and briquetage) meant an increasing definition of the social group at the level of the household (cf Bradley 1984, 141) in the wider society and the landscape.

This appears to represent an increased desire to define smaller social spaces more prominently, one that is not so apparent in the settlement record of the earlier 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. This may relate to an increased tension on land and/or population pressure, themselves

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<sup>51</sup> As at Hod Hill (Cunliffe 1991, 168)

bound in to social developments (cf. Willis 1997, 207) including perhaps the growing importance of the household unit. It is difficult to ascertain the role of the household with the difficulties discussed above in constructing concepts of household or kin social groups from the evidence of any period in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium. It is quite possible that household organisation may have been very similar in both periods. The difference can only be noted in a desire to define and distinguish that social unit. The enclosures seen in the later half of the Iron Age appear to have comprised the main social-habitation unit for a relatively small community, presumably based on the household. This contrasts earlier settlements, both enclosed and unenclosed, where more households were incorporated and the single household does not appear to be bounded in such an overt way.

In addition, this may suggest that our divisions between enclosed and unenclosed settlements; hillforts and non-hillforts were not as clear cut in the later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. These 'enclosures' within hillforts and unenclosed settlements may also stress that the act of 'enclosure' was not a defensive measure, as a result of increased tension, but a process of an increased desire to physically mark social space. This process of 'enclosure' need not imply the earlier period was necessarily an egalitarian society and the latter a highly stratified society. Stratification and hierarchy may well have been expressed in different ways in the earlier period. Conversely, the increased importance on household enclosure does not mean that each household was necessarily organised in to a rigid hierarchy of settlement and communities or independent from wider society. It may, instead, signify a wider shift of interest in expressing the independence and boundedness of the household/kin group.

The process of constructing boundaries and their physical nature may themselves had further social implications for relationships within and between communities. Many have suggested the construction of enclosure boundaries was probably beyond the household group (e.g. Watkins 1982, 115; Wigley *forthcoming b*; cf. Sharples 1991a) and may have involved a variety of social relations between communities. Activities such as enclosure digging may have been communal projects, gifts of labour or relate to status (Moore *forthcoming a*).

Elsewhere, similar changes in settlement and landscape have been regarded as relating to changes in land tenure, perhaps precipitated by growing pressure on resources as a result of a growing population. Cunliffe, for example, has explained somewhat similar changes in the Danebury environs as marking:

“...a radical re-organisation in societies conception of land ownership”

(2000, 202)

Cunliffe suggests this marks a change from land communally owned, and regularly redistributed, to one where land was in private ownership. Could we explain the process seen in the Severn-Cotswolds in the same way?

There is no reason to say that land in the earlier period in the region was necessarily held in common, or that ownership was less defined. Instead, it may be suggested that in the later period land tenure or definition of the social group had to be more firmly expressed in relation to ownership by the household or kin group and that the appearance of enclosures marked a desire to control these systems more overtly. There is a need to be cautious in such models when using essentially anachronistic terms, such as 'communal' and 'private', when discussing changing forms of land tenure in the period. Until further study has been undertaken, it is very difficult to use the material record to indicate 'communal' or private systems of lands ownership.

In conclusion, it can be argued that major social changes took place between the earlier and later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC and are directly reflected in settlement architecture. Despite the differences in settlement morphology in the later Iron Age, previously emphasised as marking social differences, particularly between enclosed and unenclosed, these may all exhibit elements of wider social processes. The nature of these changes may have wider impacts in explaining wider processes of change in the nature of social organisation and landscape and settlement change over the later and latest Iron Age.

### **5.5. The deposition of human remains in the Severn-Cotswolds**

The nature of social organisation and attitudes to space and social interaction cannot purely be interpreted through assessment of spatial use of settlements isolated from deposition practices. The nature of the deposition upon and within the landscape marks another way of assessing these communities attitudes to space, themselves and each other. In particular the deposition, disposal and treatment of human remains may be significant in indicating attitudes towards community and the nature of social organisation.

In recent years it has been widely recognized that the nature, location and extent of deposition practices in later prehistoric societies had important cultural and symbolic meanings (e.g. Bradley 1990; Cunliffe 1992; Fitzpatrick 1994; Hill 1995). Deposition of artefacts on many (or most) Iron Age sites was structured in a number of ways, possibly reflecting perceptions of space and symbolic roles in spatial organisation. Wessex has been the focus for such study

(Cunliffe 1992; Hill 1995, 1996) and there has been less attention on the extent of regional variation within these deposition practices, despite the realisation that regionality was a key element of Iron Age societies (Hill 1989; Bevan 1999; Haselgrove *et al* 2001). It has often been implied in these studies (Fitzpatrick 1994; Oswald 1997) that many of these practices, such as the preference for deposition in the south east quadrant of houses, was universally used across Britain. However, little has been done to see if deposition practices vary regionally and what such variation may imply for Iron Age societies. This section attempts to address this problem by looking at the nature of deposition practices across the study area to examine to what extent there is variation within the study area and compare with other, better studied areas of the British Isles.

There are a number of problems in examining deposition practices. Early excavation may have not recognized such deposits whilst, conversely, with recent investigation there may be a tendency to attribute finds as 'structured' deposits without quantified analysis. Within this debate the question over what is "structured deposition" and when certain finds take on that character is a difficult one and one that has not been fully resolved. The study area in part suffers from lack of well recorded sites to enable reconstruction of many of the examples of such deposition practices in comparison to Wessex thus making any quantification comparisons virtually impossible<sup>52</sup>. Any discussion here, therefore, has to be only observations of apparent practices rather than quantified comparisons within and outside the study area and as such focuses on human remains because of their higher level of recording and recognition. In addition, despite the problems in doing so, human remains have been distinguished from other artefact deposition practices (some of which are discussed elsewhere- see Chapter 7) because of the insufficient data at present from the region to construct a statistical analysis of remains making analysis of their meaning difficult to ascertain, although structured deposits undoubtedly exist in the region (see below).

The question also arises as to how we regard deposition and what is incorporated. As this study is based on an examination of the variation and nature of societies and their organisation in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC, deposition practices should best be understood in their widest sense. It is understood that deposition practices involve all the practices whereby material culture are disposed of in ways that may have been used to express meaning about the use of space, structure of communities and their environment or their perceptions of the landscape and what activities may take place in the landscape. The definition is, therefore, an extremely broad one not limiting itself to the deposition of material on site. However, such a

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<sup>52</sup> Although the potential for such analysis should be noted for the future.

study would be a thesis in itself and alongside the limitations of the material in the study area mean that this analysis has been restricted primarily to human remains which are regarded as providing one of the clearest windows on attitudes towards space, individuals, internal and external communities.

It is also clear that we cannot divide off areas of study such as 'warfare' or 'ritual and religion', as in many previous studies (e.g. Jackson 1999b). Such aspects are likely to have been part of daily living and experience on settlements and in the landscape (Hill 1995; Chadwick 1999). In addition, many aspects of what we regard as 'warfare' were probably intimately bound in to existing social relationships and contained elements of display and symbolism that reflect wider social attitudes and organization (cf. Sharples 1991a; Ferguson 1998; James *forthcoming*).

### **5.6. Burial rites in the region**

Studies of the treatment of human remains in the British Iron Age have placed an emphasis on the distinction between inhumation and deposition of separate human bones, usually regarded as either the curated or accidentally retained results of excarnation (e.g. Whimster 1981). There are a number of problems with drawing such a clear division. In particular it is difficult to be sure of the conceptual differences displayed between inhumation within pits seen at a number of sites in the region and that in distinct inhumed graves. Carr (*forthcoming*) has recently suggested that inhumation may, in some cases, be the result of 'excarnation' beneath the ground. Whilst the evidence for this is ambiguous, it raises the point that inhumation may not necessarily mark such a clear division in burial practice as is often assumed. When, for example, does a pit burial become a specific inhumation treated in a separate manner or when can headless burials be regarded as 'disarticulated' or as inhumations? Such distinctions, evident for example between Whimster (1981) and Wait (1985), may mask or create divisions in practices which were intimately related in the Iron Age. Despite such problems inhumations and 'disarticulated' remains are discussed separately here but similarities and connections highlighted.

Analysis of human remains from even such a large region as this still relies on a small and ill defined data set, be-set by problems of deposition process, taphonomy and poor recoding. Despite these problems however there is a need to begin to examine this material on a regional basis, contrasting and comparing with the far better studied corpus of material from Wessex which has been so hotly debated and examined in recent years (Cunliffe 1992; Hill 1995). Despite the recognition of 'structured deposits' (Hill 1995), pit burials (Cunliffe 1992)

and increasing numbers of inhumations in the Iron Age (Cunliffe and Poole 2000b; Hey *et al* 1999), there are still few assessments of regional variation in depositional process despite earlier analysis indicating that the treatment of human remains was highly varied (Whimster 1981). Assessment of the Severn-Cotswolds material attempts to address firstly how it compares with the rest of southern Britain and secondly what it may indicate about social relations, attitudes to space and community in the region. I will not attempt to assess the nature of Iron Age treatment of human remains but highlight the material; particularly its complexity and diversity; stressing how this material needs to be assessed within the local context of the specific site, landscape, as well its place within wider regional and national trends.

### ***5.6.1 Inhumations***

As with the rest of Iron Age Britain, inhumation burials are relatively uncommon with excarnation regarded as the main method of human disposal (Cunliffe 1991, 507; Carr and Knusel 1997). However, south west and southern Britain is producing growing evidence for particular inhumation traditions in the Iron Age and the study area itself has growing evidence that inhumation were not as rare as is often suggested. In close proximity to the study area the Iron Age 'cemeteries' at Yarnton, Oxfordshire (Hey *et al* 1999) and further afield at Sudden Farm, Hampshire (Cunliffe and Poole 2000c) indicate that inhumation rites were more common in the MIA-LIA. To the south-west, in Cornwall and Devon, an inhumation tradition is well known (Whimster 1977; Nowakowski 1991). The increase in inhumations of Iron Age date is being matched in the region with recent discoveries at Lynches, Gloucestershire (Mudd *et al* 1999) and Whitegate Farm, North Somerset [462] (Erskine 1999; Andy Young *pers comm*).

A corpus of inhumation within the study area (Appendix 5) consists of a range of sites varying in form and a number of 'off-site' inhumations in the landscape. The commonest form of internment is crouched inhumation although body position and treatment vary considerably. Even where crouched inhumation is prevalent on the same site, for example Salmonsbury (Appendix 5), variation is evident in placement of head and body. A preference for crouched or tightly flexed inhumations reflects the pattern noted for most of southern and south western Britain (Whimster 1977; 1981; Hill 1995, 12) although previous studies have noted an apparent concentration in the Cotswolds (Philpott 1991, 6). With some this might be explained by their deposition in pits (fitted in to these contexts) but with others it seems clear they have either been placed in larger ditch contexts, or specific 'graves' (often as distinct cuts within other features as at Roughground Farm and Field Farm). However, as noted

above, on some sites such as Beckford II, it is difficult to distinguish between distinct grave cuts and existing pits. Burial within or associated with boundaries, of the settlement and of features such as houses are evident (matching evidence elsewhere: e.g. Hingley 1990b) but appear less prevalent than the occurrence of disarticulated remains in such contexts. Where inhumations do occur in boundary contexts they tend to be of infants or young children (at Thornwell and Frocester) or the elaborate 'massacre' deposits described below.

Recent finds may support the idea that crouched inhumations were more common in the later Iron Age. The burial at Lynches trackway, near Baunton (Mudd et al 1999) has been crucial in this regard. The crouched inhumation (Fig. 5.6.1.2) burial, originally regarded as Bronze Age was dated by radiocarbon to between c350-40 BC<sup>53</sup> suggesting that many more isolated crouched inhumations may be of Iron Age date. This evidence begins to bring in to question, for example, the unaccompanied, crouched inhumation from the ramparts at Uley (Fig. 5.6.1.2; Saville 1983; 12), dated by the author to Roman or Post Roman period (without dating evidence), the crouched burial at Norbury (Saville 1983; 42) and a similar Iron Age example from Shipton Oliffe [108]. It seems increasingly likely that such examples could well be of Iron Age date. The extent to which other such isolated burials, in or beyond settlement contexts have gone undetected is open to question but emphasises the need for C14 dating of all burials rather than typological ascription. The number of such burials should perhaps not be over-emphasised but their existence as a distinct sector of the population requires further discussion.

Certain treatment to inhumations appears to have taken place which may shed some light on the section of the population represented. At least three sites show evidence of decapitated remains, including Frocester (female LIA: c.1<sup>st</sup> century AD?), Norbury-Northleach (claimed as Romano-British but possibly Iron Age) and six examples from the deposits at Sutton Walls. Considering the emphasis on skull parts evident in disarticulated deposits of human bones (see below) it is possible that in some cases heads were retained for other purposes. There is evidence of decapitation in Romano-British burial practice (Philpott 1991, 77) and a late date for most of these remains may imply some connection. Other remains indicate that some individuals may have been in a bag (Frocester) or bound (Kemble; Bourton-on-the-Water) and match similar practices seen elsewhere in Iron Age Britain and northern Europe (Cunliffe 1992; Verger 2000). Reasons for this are unclear but many have suggested that the sections of the population treated by deposition in pits especially may have been sacrifices, special members of the community or the unclear (Cunliffe 1984c, 164). The number of

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<sup>53</sup> 4 radiocarbon dates from the same body: at 2 sigma: 390-110BC; 340-70BC; 340-40BC; 300-80BC.

disabilities on Iron Age inhumations has also recently been highlighted, for example, from East Yorkshire (JD Hill, lecture) and the bodies deposited at Folly Lane (Ros Niblett, lecture). It may be, therefore, that those buried possessed traits (illnesses or deformities) which marked them out from the rest of the community and led to their treatment distinct from the rest of society.

Physical disabilities on examples from the region have seldom been recorded, although to what extent this marks absence or lack of recognition is difficult to determine. The burials at Frocester show evidence that physical disabilities may have been important in why these individuals were deposited and how. The woman in an apparent bag (Grave 8) buried in a ditch terminal was noted as having one arm significantly longer than the other (Price 2000, 206). Grave 13 which may also date to the LIA or at least early Roman period on the basis of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD material in the grave fill was marked by a variety of problems, including osteomyelitis of the arm and a deformed sacrum (Price 2000, 207) and also (probably not coincidentally) was marked by being decapitated and, as with the others, was female. It is wrong to assume necessarily that this marked a punishment but may have entailed specific treatment for religious reasons.

Elsewhere it appears that infant burials were particularly reserved for boundary burials. This may be the case at Frocester with two infant burials seem to be in the gully of the 'missed' roundhouse<sup>54</sup> and also at The Park. Most notable of this trend is the large number of neonatal infant burials in the LIA rampart at Thornwell (Hughes 1996, 80). The extent to which children, particularly those that died prior to term or soon after, might also have been regarded as 'special' or representing significant members of the community or if, as in Roman period were not fully regarded as individuals (Philpott 1991) is uncertain. However, concepts over the liminal role of boundaries as symbolic and social, as well as physical, boundaries between people and communities (e.g. Hingley 1990b) may imply that neonates held a similar significance as liminal between birth/death and the living.

One of the characteristics of the treatment of human remains in the region is its diversity. Such diversity reflects perhaps not just the general variety noted in southern Britain (Whimster 1981), but also the location of the Severn-Cotswolds on the interface between seemingly varied cultural, economic and social traditions. The cist burials recorded at

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<sup>54</sup> The C14 date is probably slightly earlier than that given by Price and may be early in the middle Iron Age- probably very early in the site – consistent with an early date for the circular feature prior to the enclosure ditch.

Clevedon [335] and Weston-super-mare [337] may reflect the cross-cultural contacts of the region in all aspects of social life. Potentially, these mark outliers of the distinct tradition of cist burials in Cornwall and Devon (Whimster 1977; 1981) and their location on the Severn coast and the contacts between these regions seen, for example, in later Iron Age pottery design, might argue for such a link. However, the poor recording and lack of accurate dating for the cist burials at Clevedon and Weston-Super-Mare makes it impossible to determine whether these are best paralleled with the later Iron Age burials from the south west, Bronze Age cist burials or the inhumations elsewhere in the region of the latest Iron Age. Other Iron Age cist burials have been claimed in the region in Gloucestershire at Naunton, Nymphsfield (Staelens 1982, 29) and Hailes (Clifford 1944) although the dating of many of these is uncertain and some may be Bronze Age or Roman. The cist burials may also be regarded as reflecting the move seen at Birdlip and High Nash, of inhuming (presumably) high status individuals. The apparent presence of only glass beads in the North Somerset burials (Whimster 1981), however, suggests a date in the MIA may be more accurate.

### ***5.6.2 Boundary burial***

Within the corpus of inhumations a distinct group of burials may inform us of relations between communities and landscape. Much has been said on the role and importance of human remains in boundary contexts on settlements (Bowden and McOmish 1987; Hingley 1990b; Hill 1995, 76) and such practices are evident in the region and discussed above. Boundaries also appear to have been fundamental within a landscape, as well as settlement context, in the construction and maintenance of land tenure and social relations (see ch. 4 and 6) and there is growing evidence from the region that the placement of bodies within landscape boundaries may have been crucial in expressing such relationships.

Burials (inhumations) within landscape boundaries exist at a number of sites and have increased with recent investigations focusing beyond 'settlement sites' (e.g. the A417/419 road scheme: Mudd *et al* 1999). The longevity of this tradition and its importance may be exhibited by the (EIA?) crouched inhumation with broken legs in a pit alignment at Ashton Keynes/Shorncote (Hey 2000, 4) and the early Roman (or possibly LIA?) burial in an Iron Age boundary at Wyre Piddle (Napthan *et al* 1997, 19). The crouched burial at Roughground Farm (Allen *et al* 1993) is particularly informative on the practice of placing inhumations in boundary contexts. Here a burial (radiocarbon dated to 180-120 BC) was cut into an existing and apparently partly silted EIA ditch. This feature, despite being partly silted, appears to have remained a significant and visible feature to a community located somewhere near by (although no later Iron Age settlement traces were found in the immediate vicinity of the EIA

unenclosed settlement). This indicates the extent to which it was not just existing boundaries that were important but also earlier boundaries were recognised as functioning boundaries or symbolic ones. The act of placing a member of the community in such a feature may have been used to express land tenure and/or association with ancestral or mythical ownership of land (Chapter 6).

A recent inhumation from Field Farm near Shepton Mallet (Leach 2002) may mark a similar role to that from Roughground. The inhumation, of a young adult, was deposited in an upper fill of a silted up EIA ditch. Although dating of the inhumation is uncertain, deposition in a silting up ditch may suggest that it is a similar practice of recognising existing boundaries. Another example could possibly exist near Peasdown, where an apparently EIA ditch with an inhumation was uncovered although details are negligible (Wedlake 1958, 39). The relationship between later burials and earlier landscape features had wider implications for attitudes towards the existing landscape in the later Iron Age suggesting that these boundaries remained significant (See chapter 6). The apparently early Roman burial in a silted up Iron Age boundary ditch at Wyre Piddle (Napthán *et al* 1997) may indicate a similar reference to an earlier or existing boundary and perhaps emphasises the longevity of such practices<sup>55</sup>.

The recent discovery of a later Iron Age 'burial' in a stream edge at Old Yew Hill, Worcestershire (Griffin *et al* 2002) may mark another 'boundary burial'. This apparently isolated, off site inhumation could potentially mark an association with what may have been perceived as a natural boundary as opposed to a man made ditch, using the natural feature as a landscape boundary. As with the Lynches, the later Iron Age date depends on radiocarbon (2 sigma: 190BC-AD10). The apparently off site burial at Shipton Oliffe, Gloucestershire [108] may represent another example. In such cases the extent to which settlement may be related is somewhat unclear, although it seems certain that they are burials 'off-site' as opposed to those seen in pit burials or in boundaries elsewhere, and instead may relate to manmade or natural boundary locations between or within communities. In all cases it stresses the role of using human remains to relate to or to imbue a boundary with added importance and social significance which may reflect ties between the community and the boundary in terms of land tenure or the symbolic importance of the feature as an interface between, for example, 'ours' and 'theirs', outside and inside, manmade and natural, lived space and landscape.

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<sup>55</sup> The recent discovery of an inhumation in the monumental boundary at Aves Ditch (Oxfordshire), suggested as marking a late Iron Age tribal boundary (Sauer 1998) may mark a similar action of imbuing the boundary with significance.

### 5.6.3 Gender and age

It is less clear what sections or members of the community were deposited in these burials. Clearly the small number of inhumations marks only a small proportion of the population begging the question why some were singled out for deposition. Gender and age patterning may shed some light on this. The gender of most human remains is unknown, reflecting the state of disarticulated unsexable remains (Fig. 5.6.3.1). Of those that can these are mainly inhumations but includes some disarticulated remains; particularly skulls, although in some instances such sexing (particularly in earlier reports) may be questionable. When the deposits at Sutton Walls (22 sex identifiable bodies: all male) and Bredon Hill (c.50 individuals all 'probably' male) are excluded from the analysis the ratio between male and female is virtually 1:1. Assuming both the Sutton Walls and Bredon Hill deposits to be the result of warfare may have influenced sexing to some degree, even if not it is best to perhaps regard these deposits as somewhat exceptional.

Variation between sites is also apparent. For example, although only a small sample, and one where the sexing has not been confirmed, the interments at Salmonsbury appear to be dominated by female remains. At Salmonsbury there also appears to be some evidence of gender differentiation suggested by the different position of the single male burial (aligned north rather than east) and its distinct grave (rather than reused pit). In addition, it is notable that all the disarticulated remains are female<sup>56</sup>. Overall, however, there does not appear to be a clear relationship between sex and context. The lack of clear gender differentiation in deposition may stress that choice of those deposited had little direct association with sex (or was related purely to factors such as death in child birth) but may have related to other factors such as status, criminality, warfare or heads of household).

The age of human remains<sup>57</sup> (Fig. 5.6.3.2) shows a strong preference to adults, somewhat at odds with the idea of many infant burials as a result of high child mortality (Bruck 1995)<sup>58</sup>. The dominance of adults may also be skewed by the assemblage from Sutton Walls and within this overall picture there is variation; some sites dominated by certain age ranges. Thornwell, for example, is all neonates (Hughes 1996) whilst Salmonsbury is dominated by adults (7:2) and Dibbles Farm and Sutton Walls are composed entirely of adults. Because of such variation it seems rash to describe certain sites containing particular deposits with particular meanings. What it may suggest is the local variation in ritual depositional practices.

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<sup>56</sup> Although exactly how these were sexed is not entirely clear.

<sup>57</sup> Based on published ages which are often non-specific i.e. 'child', 'adult' or 'infant'

<sup>58</sup> It may also be biased by taphonomy: greater preservation of adult long bones/skulls.

At Thornwell for example child burials, apparently in boundary contexts, were perceived as essential whilst adults remains were deposited 'off-site' in contrast to some sites with a greater focus of burials of adults 'on-site'. Complexity can also be seen in larger samples although there is also some indication of an over representation of juveniles in the cist cemeteries in Cornwall (Moore unpub).

It is difficult to see any correlation between form of site and gender/age patterns suggesting perhaps broad ritual and deposition practices which were manipulated and interpreted within a local context, a pattern being noted for other aspects of symbolic and social life such as entrance orientation (see above). The range in age and sex of interred remains does not lend itself to simplistic social models relating to burials, such as heads of household, and indicates extremely complex processes were in action to determine how human remains were treated, where and how they were deposited and which members of the community received what treatment. It is important to emphasise that excarnation was not necessarily of lower status than inhumation. Ethnographic evidence from Nepal and North America (Carr and Knusel 1997, 168) suggests such treatment could be regarded as high status.

### 5.7. The deposition of 'disarticulated' human bone

Table 5.7.1. Sites with disarticulated bones in the region<sup>59</sup>

<u>Site</u>	<u>Type of site</u>	<u>Date of deposit</u>
Glastonbury	Lake Village	MIA
Llanmelin	Hillfort/Enclosure	MIA
Tickenham rock shelter	Cave	
Salmonsbury	LIA Large enclosure	LIA
Herriots Bridge	Unenclosed?	LIA/ER
Backwell Cave	Cave	IA
Merlin Cave	Cave	IA
Groundwell West	Enclosure	EIA
Blaise Castle	Hillfort	MIA
Budbury	Hillfort	LBA/EIA
Crickley Hill	Hillfort	LBA/EIA
Little Solsbury	Hillfort	EIA
Bagendon	LIA Large enclosure (industrial area)	LIA
Keltic Cavern/Read's Cavern	Cave	MIA
Meare West	Lake Village	MIA
Small Down camp	Hillfort	EIA
Wookey hole	Cave	MIA
Kemble	Unenclosed?	MIA

<sup>59</sup> From published sources only. It is likely that disarticulated remains have been found on a number of more recent 'grey' literature sites but lack of full reports does not allow examination.

Shorcote	Unenclosed? (Waterhole)	LBA
Frocester	Enclosure	M-LIA
Conderton Camp	Hillfort/enclosure	MIA
Sun Hole Cave	Cave	IA
Ditches	Hillfort/Enclosure	LIA
Aston Mill	Enclosure	MIA
Bredon Hill	Hillfort	MIA
Worlebury	Hillfort	MIA?
Kingsdown Camp	Enclosure	MIA-LIA
Beckford I	Enclosure	MIA-LIA

Analysis of reports from the region indicates 27 sites with disarticulated human remains. This figure is likely to be under-representative with a lack of bone reports or analysis from most of the recent investigations where human remains might be expected; for example Beckford II, Claydon Pike and Thornhill Farm. Some earlier excavations may also have missed human bones although such an argument can be tempered by the recognition of human remains at Glastonbury and Small Down Camp in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The type of sites yielding human remains (Fig. 5.7.1) may not be an accurate reflection of past practices and perhaps more marks the focus of excavation and currently available reports. Observation at hillforts and cave sites for example reflect to some extent the focus of early research patterns. However, the high proportion of remains from caves is surely significant and has been recently added to by the deposits at a swallow hole in Alverston in South Gloucestershire. The majority of human remains in Iron Age contexts in caves appear to be disarticulated remains although there may be some indication of inhumation at some sites, such as Charterhouse Swallet (Levitan *et al* 1988), reflecting the use of caves elsewhere to deposit human remains both disarticulated and whole (Whimster 1981; Bruck 1995).

The date of deposition of human remains in cave sites varies considerably and evidence of deposition of human remains in caves in the in the Mendips and Wye valley (RNE Barton *pers comm*) and elsewhere in the LBA (Bruck 1995, 260) suggests it may mark continuity from earlier practices. However, the majority of sites appear to be of later Iron Age date with Glastonbury wares from Read's Cavern (Langford 1921)<sup>60</sup>, for example, and a radiocarbon date 350-50 BC from Charterhouse Swallett.

What does the deposition of human remains in caves represent? Considering arguments that pit burials may have represented offerings to chthonic deities (Cunliffe 1992) one might argue

<sup>60</sup> Direct association with the human remains is not easily confirmed with early investigations

that caves represented similar access to the 'underworld'. The use of caves for other activities, particularly metalworking (Chapter 6 and 7), also suggests these locations had a particular significance in transformation processes: through metalworking and from life to death. These locations have also been suggested as liminal locations (Hingley 1990b; Bruck 1995, 260) and as such regarded as significant in the treatment of the dead and metalworking activities (Hingley 1997). Caves might also, alongside landscape boundaries for example, have been regarded as marking the bounds of settlement or living areas, away from the domestic sphere both literally and marking a symbolic liminality between the 'lived' space and special areas of the landscape and other worlds. Bruck (1995, 160) has suggested that children are common in LBA cave sites, suggesting these sites were connected with initiation rites. The age range of the material from cave sites in the region, however, is varied with those from Sun Hole including elderly adults and a child of ten and five, an adult at Wookey Hole and both adults and children at Slaughterford suggesting no particular association with child burial rites.

Recent studies on the deposition of human remains have argued that the absence of remains on sites may be as important as its presence (e.g. Bruck 1995). The actual situations will clearly relate heavily to a range of factors, including excavation strategies and soil conditions but may also relate to past deposition processes. Analysis of sites in the region, whilst revealing that human remains, particularly in disarticulated form, are relatively common in line with the rest of southern England (Bruck 1995; Hill 1995), indicates that many sites have no human remains. Crickley Hill, for example, despite the large area investigated, has seemingly produced only four fragments of finger bones (P. Dixon *pers comm*). Other sites without human remains, where they might be expected, include Birdlip enclosure, Gilders Paddock, Evesham, all the sites investigated by the A417 road scheme (Mudd *et al* 1999, 469), Midsummer Hill (the latter possibly due to soil acidity), Chew Park, Butcombe and Lydney. In some cases, therefore, there may have been deliberate depositional processes at work but as yet no obvious pattern in the location, nature or date of sites can explain such absences.

Fig. 5.7.2 shows the number of sites exhibiting different parts of the body<sup>61</sup>. Combined, jaw-bones, skulls and fragments of skull make up by far the largest proportion of remains represented. On particular sites, like Glastonbury, the number of skull fragments is large, possible relating to particular preservation at Glastonbury, although even taking into account such preservation the numbers seem large, possibly suggesting a particular emphasis on retention and/or deposition of head parts at the site. This emphasis on the deposition of head

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<sup>61</sup> number of sites rather than total number of finds so that Glastonbury and Meare do not skew the results.

parts in LBA and Iron Age contexts has long been noted (Whimster 1981; Hingley 1990b; Bruck 1995) and variously interpreted, for example, as marking cult of the head (Brunaux 1987). The extent to which taphanomic process played a part in bones found is difficult to quantify although long bones and skulls would appear to be the most likely remains after excarnation. Other studies (Bruck 1995; Hill 1995), however, have stressed that the types of bones represented and their location on sites cannot be explained purely by taphanomic processes.

The emphasis seen in the region on skull/skull fragments reflects that in other studies (e.g. Cunliffe 1984c, 164; 1992; Bruck 1995, 256). What is also notable, however, is the emphasis on deposition of skull fragments as opposed to entire skulls (certainly fragmented prior to deposition) suggesting that fragments of skull (including jaw bones) were as (if not more) important and widespread as whole skulls. In many cases such pieces made up part of larger deposits which included inhumations, for example at Sutton Walls (Kenyon 1953) and at Glastonbury at least one piece was retained as either a spindle whorl or amulet (Coles and Minnit 1995, 170). Whilst it is difficult to be sure that all deposits mark deliberately structured placement of these fragments, it does suggest that parts of skulls were preferentially retained and deposited. The retained fragments of individual skulls in particular may have been given to individuals or communities as acts of social linkage to the deceased. This fragmentation may have been similar to that argued for quern fragments in Chapter 7. If this was the case the excarnation and dismemberment of the body marks as much an inclusive act for the community, if not more so, than whole inhumation within or beyond the settlement. To some extent then it may have been important members of the community who had to be excarnated with their remains split and distributed between the rest of the community or even other communities.

The context of disarticulated remains may shed further light on the meaning of such deposits. Again individual sites and problems in definition may hamper analysis. Some deposits such as those at Bredon and Sutton Walls which include disarticulated remains in entrance way/ enclosure ditch contexts have not been included as they may represent slightly different process although their similarity to other, smaller scale, depositions may illustrate their connection with other practices. The picture in Fig 5.7.3 generally reflects that seen elsewhere (e.g. Bruck 1995, fig.2) although with a slightly greater dominance of human remains in contexts associated with houses; including in house gullies (e.g. Groundwell West, Beckford I), postholes and floor levels (Bredon) but is somewhat skewed by the many finds from 'mounds' at Glastonbury, Meare West and Meare East, although with the latter there seems no reason to not see these depositions as relating to house contexts. It may be that more

deposition took place in and around the house on other sites but the absence of floor levels on most Iron Age sites biases the picture towards pits and ditches.

Pits and enclosure ditches make up a large proportion of finds and again it is difficult to know when to distinguish such inclusions in pits from the inhumations in storage pits at sites like Dibbles Farm and Salmonsbury. In some cases, as argued above, symbolically or cognitively other locations may have been regarded in a similar light: as ways in to the earth; for example caves and the LBA waterhole at Shorncliffe. The disarticulated remains from the paving at Salmonsbury may indicate similar attention to boundary contexts as with enclosure ditches and are similar perhaps to deposition on the entrance paving at Bredon Hill. The association of some deposits with other material may suggest they were part of wider special structured deposits, such as the female (?) skull at Salmonsbury site IV, found in a ditch associated with goat skull and lower jaw of a pike. The absence of fish eating at most Iron Age sites within the region (and beyond) may suggest fish had a special, possibly even a ritual role, in society (Dobney and Eynck *forthcoming*) and therefore may be significant in this burial.

The overall distribution of human remains at Glastonbury (Coles and Minnit 1995, fig. 8.10) may caution against placing too much emphasis on one area of the site being the focus for deposition or emphasis of remains on the boundary of the settlement. Deposition practices may, therefore, have been highly varied on settlements although certain contexts were undoubtedly preferred. It is difficult to be sure what these remains signify about attitudes towards the dead and/or social organisation. Others have emphasised the deposition of remains in 'liminal' boundary contexts to define areas of communities from others or other places (Bowden and McOmish 1987; Bruck 1995). The same may be said of some deposits in the region but clearly they would seem to represent far more complex meanings and some association with ancestor worship within the domestic sphere seems likely (cf. Bruck 1995, 259). What is notable from the region is that, although the data set is small, there does not appear to be any regional distinctions in the form or location of depositions, suggesting widespread processes across the region and southern Britain as a whole. Although the deposition of human remains may have been used to reinforce or express social relations within and between communities it does not appear that the mode of such expressions varied enormously although they were clearly modified within the local context, as has been suggested for elements such as roundhouse and enclosure entrance orientation.

### **5.8. 'Massacre' deposits**

The presence of human remains on sites in the area has a long tradition of being associated with massacre or invasion, for example at Glastonbury (Dawkins 1917), Bredon (Hencken 1938<sup>62</sup>, Thomas forthcoming), Cadbury (Alcock 1972), Sutton Walls (Kenyon 1953) or relating to cannibalism (Dunning 1976). The region is somewhat unusual in having within, and close by, four so-called massacre deposits at Bredon, Sutton Walls, Worlebury and Cadbury, which merit discussion. It has long been recognized that these seem to be more complex than simply the result of warfare (Hencken 1938; Hingley 1990b) suggesting a ritual element.<sup>63</sup> There are a variety of problems in distinguishing such deposits from other remains. Whilst there are similarities with other deposits, for example, the association with ramparts, in line with similar depositions of articulated and disarticulated remains in the region and elsewhere (Bowden and McOmish 1987; Hingley 1990a), the following deposits show some aspects which *may* set them apart or may indicate them as examples of more defined and elaborate processes evident elsewhere.

Other human remains previously described as the result of massacre can be more easily reinterpreted. At Glastonbury, the description of the remains as a 'massacre' (Dawkins 1917) relied on regarding all the material as one phase and the remains have been shown to relate to a variety of deposition episodes (Coles and Minnit 1995; Carr and Knusel 1997). The Worlebury deposit may also be worthy of reinterpretation and better regarded as pit burials rather than necessarily the result of a single 'event' (see below). Arguments over the form and meaning of the other deposits are complex and controversial. It is important here to have a relatively detailed discussion of these deposits as their meaning may have important implications on the nature of later Iron Age society.

### ***5.8.1 Nature of the deposits***

#### *Bredon Hill*

Reinterpretation of the deposit at Bredon is hampered by a lack of detailed analysis of the bones in the report, plans of the deposits or certainty about the nature of the 'massacre' context. Despite these problems it appears that the remains form a single deposition horizon on the paving of the final entrance way of the interior rampart (Hencken 1938, 56). It is possible, however, that they in fact represent different deposition episodes and have been conflated by the excavator without establishing any stratigraphic relationship. That said,

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<sup>62</sup> Hencken seemed to realise that the deposits did not make sense entirely as result of 'massacre'.

<sup>63</sup> Although even Bowden and McOmish (1987) argued these deposits could be related to the Roman conquest

whilst there are other depositions of disarticulated remains within the camp (see above) the remains in the entrance way appear to represent a single deposit associated *possibly* with a single event (Hencken 1938, 57). With both this deposit and that at Sutton Walls, however, interpretation as a single event cannot be confirmed and the context of the interpretation of these remains (1930s and 50s) should be considered. Wheeler's interpretation of the war graves at Maiden Castle (1943) and of the Indian site of Mohenjodaro (Wheeler 1947), as the result of single (warfare) acts have since been recognised as conflating and simplifying more complex processes and multiple deposition events (Sharples 1991c for Maiden Castle; Dales 1964; McIntosh 2002, 177 for Mohenjodaro). The close links of both individuals to Mortimer Wheeler (see Chapter 2; Hencken 1938, 2 and 22) and the interpretation fashions of the time undoubtedly significantly influenced their interpretations.

The Bredon deposit consists of a variety of body parts which Hencken (1938, 56) notes were dominated by skulls and long bones; crucially she appears to note significant structuring in the location of the bones deposited; an area dominated by leg bones, one where skulls were generally absent and an area where they were more common appearing to suggest that the deposition was deliberately structured. A photo from the report (1938, Plate XXIXb) shows the complexity and high level of disarticulation of the remains lying on the paving including a thorax, unarticulated leg bone, seemingly unassociated mandibles near by and unarticulated vertebrae. This implies that any human remains were extremely dismembered upon deposition and it seems likely that some were deposited as bones rather than fleshed (*contra* Hencken 1938, 56).

The emphasis in the deposit on skulls and long bones matches wider practices of disarticulated remains (see above) and deposition of such remains in boundary locations and entrance. Human bones, for example, were also found amongst the LIA paving to the entrance at Salmonsbury (see above) potential associated with other significant deposits (see Ch. 7) which may suggest that the Bredon deposit, although on a far larger scale, is not dissimilar to other deposits from the region. Within the context of the site itself, such remains are also not entirely unusual, with human deposits from earlier contexts from inside the rampart particularly associated with the 'hut' directly behind the inner rampart (1938, 29). This consisted of disarticulated remains in the sump pit, posthole and possibly floor levels associated with the structure (see above). These may be associated with a possibly single deposit of animal remains described as "the outer edge of the hut floor was surrounded by a ring of broken up animal bones" which included sheep, cattle, pig, dog, hare, fox and horse. Other finds included horse harness and miniature stone axe, the latter of particular interest possibly deliberately curated. The possibility that this may represent a 'shrine' area or at least

focus for deposition similar to that at Cadbury (Downes 1997) may be important in the wider context of the site.

The associated finds with the deposit both date the deposition and provides further context for the nature of the deposit. The 'massacre level' is contemporary with the last period of the Inner Gate with much of the material in the final Inner Gate providing dating evidence alongside those directly associated with the deposit. The finds listed by Hencken from the massacre level are as follows.

- Bronze scabbard chapes (4): all are very similar type and all broken. Described as mainly South western in type and as 'Roman prototypes' dated to early 1<sup>st</sup> c AD.
- Seven iron spearheads (these have been re-dated by W. Manning (Thomas *forthcoming*), who gives them an early Roman date, similar to those from Hod Hill).
- Hammers similar to examples seen at Glastonbury – two types – short stubby and thinner examples. These on size and form appear to be metalworking hammers. At least two or three are from the massacre deposit
- Sword scabbards (broken)? And an Iron knife which actually appears to be shears.
- Bronze headed pins, bronze studs, 2 finger rings and tubular pieces of bronze which appears to be some form of ornament.

Within this deposit the hammers, regarded by Hencken as possible weapons, are probably metal working hammers. A large number of other pieces of broken bronze and ornaments were found in the levels associated with the remains (the 'massacre level') (ibid, 70). If, as Hencken, and later Thomas (*forthcoming*), have stated this was a massacre, one needs to explain why such equipment would find its way into this deposit rather than been abandoned in working areas (if the site had been raided). The condition of many of the objects from the deposit is also of interest and regarded by Hencken as significant enough for comment. Hencken (1938, 57) notes that the weapons in the associated deposit were broken: "ignored as being too much broken for further use". Since then the importance of the deposition of broken or 'ritually killed' objects (particularly weapons) has been noted in a range of LBA and Iron Age contexts in Britain and Europe (Fitzpatrick 1984; Brunaux 1987; Bradley 1990) and might be seen in another LIA burial at High Nash, Coleford where the sword was bent (Webster 1990). The broken nature of these materials, therefore, can perhaps be seen in a different light as the deposition of artefacts already deliberately broken. Alongside the human remains, therefore, the artefacts suggest a more structured deposit than artefacts left by a

pillaging enemy and it is better to see this metalwork as deliberate deposition associated with the human remains.

The date of the deposit is crucial in understanding its wider significance. Clearly it appears to have marked the final abandonment of the site. Finds from the deposit would appear to support Hencken's claim of an early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD date. Thomas (*forthcoming*), on the basis of Manning's reinterpretation of the spears, declares that the spear head is probably of Roman type indicating a date around the Roman conquest for the 'massacre'. Such specificity of dating is problematic and difficult for even far better assemblages associated with such deposits elsewhere (Barrett *et al* 2000, 116) and continues a potentially simplistic interpretation of the remains as a military massacre. The pottery from the massacre level (Hencken 1938, 109) compares well with a variety of examples from Salmonsbury of LIA date and the apparent lack of any decorated Malvern wares associated with the deposit *may* suggest a late date. The lack of any late La Tène or 1<sup>st</sup> century AD brooches from the site or the final deposit, however, might be used to argue for a pre-1<sup>st</sup> century AD (possibly even pre-1<sup>st</sup> century BC) date for the deposit, and for the abandonment of the site in general (Haselgrove 1997). A LIA date seems most likely with dating to the Roman conquest based on far too many assumptions.

### *Sutton Walls*

The deposit at Sutton Walls has similarities and differences from that at Bredon. The majority of remains from the site are disarticulated in some form, in fact the majority of individuals represented by parts rather than skeletons, although not seemingly to the extent of those at Bredon or Cadbury and there are a number of (almost) complete skeletons most in what seems to be a single 'dump'. A number of the bodies have been decapitated. It was assumed by Cornwall (1953) that most of the separate heads belong to these bodies but it appears from the report and photos that individual heads and other long bones were also in the deposition and may not relate the more complete skeletons. As with Bredon and other sites there is an emphasis in partial remains on long bones and skulls.

One particular feature of the burials at Sutton Walls is the orientation of the bodies. The majority of skeletons appear to be aligned NE-SE. The choice of this orientation may be significant and matches a large number of inhumations in the region. It is notable that this orientation also matches the alignment of the entrance passage but not the direction of the ditch, as might be expected, further suggesting some deliberate structuring to the placement of the remains as opposed to casual discard.

The Sutton deposit is different to those at Bredon and Cadbury in having no associated artefacts. This might fit better with a massacre interpretation and be explained by a stripping of the bodies, although the majority of Iron Age inhumations and even disarticulated remains are not associated with artefacts (Appendix 5). This makes dating the deposit difficult. They are located on an initial level of a re-cut of the existing later Iron Age ditch (Kenyon 1953, 7). This might imply a LIA date, although a single early Roman sherd is claimed from the level *below* the bodies (Kenyon 1953, 9) possibly suggesting a 1<sup>st</sup> century AD date. The similarity of the treatment of bodies to the other deposits at Bredon, Cadbury and disarticulated remains elsewhere, suggests a later Iron Age date is probable and most likely after the main use of Malvern decorated wares therefore potentially as late as the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Such a date would appear to match the date of the deposits at Cadbury and Bredon both of probable 1<sup>st</sup> century AD date.

### *Cadbury Castle*

Woodward and Hill (in Barrett *et al* 2000) have reconsidered the Cadbury entrance deposit and regarded it as the result of a variety of different processes. At least one of these has been suggested as the result of a probable battle associated with the entrance way. A number of remains, especially the skulls have evidence of burning (Barrett *et al* 2000, 110). This may relate to some treatment, possibly some form of pyre (Woodward and Hill in Barrett 2000, 115), although temperatures were clearly not reached to cremate the bones, although this may or may not relate to the structured massacre deposit.

The Cadbury deposited is associated with a number of artefacts including spear heads, brooches, weapons and Roman armour. Woodward and Hill (Barrett *et al* 2000, 115) have recently recognised that this material appears to have been “reworked” by those who deposited the remains and constitutes a ritualised, structured deposit. Significantly, however, they accept this needn’t mean that the bodies themselves did not result from a conflict; possibly between Romans and natives. On the basis of the finds dating appears to be mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD although any direct association with Roman military events (Alcock 1972) has been left open to question (Woodward in Barrett *et al* 2000, 116).

### *Worlebury*

The main argument for a massacre at the site has been the existence of sword cuts on a number of the skulls (Appendix 5) and suggestion that some of the burial positions appear to

be traumatic, for example “thrown in to the pit” and two bodies “as if in a struggle” (Dymond 1902). However, the deposit at Worlebury has many dissimilarities with the deposits described above. All the remains deposited at Worlebury appear to derive from storage pits, some with other potentially structured animal remains such as bird bones (Dymond 1902). It is debatable, therefore, whether it may be better regarded those as more similar to the pit burials elsewhere in the region and sites like Danebury which also show evidence of trauma (Cunliffe and Poole 1991, 423; 1992) and unusual body position (e.g. Dibbles Farm, Frocester etc).

### *5.8.2 Gender and Age of bodies in deposits*

The Cadbury deposit includes just three sexed individuals (two male; one female) of ages: 11 under ten years old; 18 of 10-19 years and 40 over 19 years. At Sutton Walls, 32 individuals were adults (over 16) with just one aged around 12 (Cornwall 1953, 77) all (22) sexed individuals were male. At Worlebury only 3 were sexed; all male, all were adult as were the majority of the other 18 or so individuals (Dymond 1902). There is no detailed sexing or aging of the remains from Bredon although Hencken claims the majority are male of adult age, although at least one “child” was also recorded in the deposit.

### *5.8.3 Discussion*

Certain characteristics of the deposit at Bredon, Sutton Walls and Cadbury suggest that interpretations as the result of massacres in warfare are simplistic. However, similarities between the deposits suggest they may form more than ‘one-off’ events at each site and may mark wider processes of deposition and social upheaval.

The deposition practices, particularly the dismemberment of bodies and the emphasis of on skull and long bones deposition at all three sites, although on a larger scale to that seen on other sites is not completely different. When examined in detail many of the finds from Bredon, Sutton Walls and Cadbury mark similar practices seen on other sites; in the parts and ways body parts were deposited. Therefore, can we fully distinguish these rites from other deposition practices? However, other elements of these deposits distinguishes them from other inhumations and disarticulated remains. The scale of the deposits and numbers of individuals represented. Rather than one or two individuals these deposits represent groups of 30 or 50 people. However, the similarity of deposits with other disarticulated remains suggests these deposits can be argued to represent monumental examples of practices which

had and were taking place on these and other sites throughout the LBA and Iron Age. What marks them out primarily is their size and association with final abandonment of these large enclosures; particularly the entrance ways. It seems difficult to regard these deposits as all marking very similar 'massacres' of groups individuals defending entrance ways as currently seems to be the case (Barrett *et al* 2000, 116). This need not mean that these individuals did not meet untimely and traumatic deaths. Sword cuts and trauma are visible on remains from Bredon (Hencken 1938), Sutton Walls (Cornwall 1953, 76) and Cadbury. However, this itself does not imply a massacre and sword cuts and trauma injuries have been noted on a range of other remains in the region and beyond (Cunliffe 1992; James *forthcoming*). In addition to the massacre deposits, sword cuts have been identified on disarticulated skull fragments from the Ditches, Glastonbury, Worlebury and Meare West. The practice of burying those with trauma injuries or deliberately killing those people in certain ways for deliberate deposition was not an unusual practice (see above). These other examples may also infer violence or be the result of conflict (Whimster 1981; James *forthcoming*) and indicate that deposition of such remains was not uncommon in the region and what marks the 'massacre' deposits out is their size.

Other factors in the placement and form of these deposits may infer they cannot be simply interpreted as the remains of individuals killed and butchered where they lay. Firstly, the grave goods discussed above suggest that many seem to be unlikely to be the result of warfare; the existence of many personal ornaments of relatively high status at Cadbury Castle and the presence of small metalworking hammers at Bredon, suggests these may be deliberate depositions rather than refuse or 'weapons'. Secondly, the nature of the deposit also implies specific treatment of the remains and it was recognised, as early as Hencken (1938), that these remains were not bodies that had been left where they lay. This treatment of the dead before deposition clearly indicates some ritualised activity but fits less well with the argument that finds associated with the remains were casual losses or discarded/missed objects from pillaging (cf. Woodward and Hill in Barrett *et al* 2000, 115). In addition, ethnographic evidence usually suggests that weapons and other objects were stripped from the bodies of defeated armies prior to deposition (cf. Brunaux 1987; Fiorato *et al* 2001).

There are a number of possibilities to explain these deposits which may include a 'massacre' or large scale killing but see such events in more complex terms. Two major explanations for these deposits seem likely. Firstly, that the hillfort community ritually abandoned the site at which point they felt the need to embellish existing depositional practices and perform a large scale deposition. The reasons for this may be varied: possibly implying the significance of these monuments to a wider community (it always possible for instance that the individuals represented came from a far wider area/community than the hillfort itself) and/or the

significance in ending the life of that site. The second explanation is that another community massacred the population of the hillfort. What is significant in this explanation, however, is that in these cases the 'victors' felt the need to ritually dismember inhabitants, in a way that was in line with existing practices of ritual deposition taking place on settlements elsewhere. Such treatment of defeated armies is attested elsewhere in the late Iron Age (e.g. Caesar's Gallic Wars) and been suggested at Hjortspring, Denmark (Randsborg 1995) and the temple at Ribemont-sur-Ancre, France (Brunaux 1987).

The dating of these deposits is also potentially significant. All belong to the final centuries of the Iron Age (potentially all of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD or slightly earlier), although specific dating is vague, and all to the final abandonment of what were highly visible, prominent enclosures. It has been argued elsewhere (Ch. 4) that the importance of many hillfort enclosures has been underplayed and that the role, treatment and visibility of many of these sites was significant to a wider community. It may be significant that of the earlier hillforts where abandonment phases are understood, many sites appear to be burnt; some at high temperatures (see Ch.4); for example Crickley, Leckhampton and Bury Wood Camp. These burning and abandonment episodes have also been interpreted as the result of warfare (Dixon 1994) yet at none of these sites is there evidence for similar deposits of human remains.

The final acts of abandonment on these sites might better be understood in different ways. Earlier hillforts when abandoned were burnt potentially as a statement to a wider community (4.3.3) but in the later/LIA a similar act of expressing to a wider community took a different form. The deposition of human remains on the paving of entrance ways, not covered or interred, at all three sites would have presented a highly visible and macabre scene. Such an act is in contrast to burning the site and may imply different meanings including a continued hold over or association by the dead or their decedents with the site. If anything, possession may have been by those bodies, decaying within visibility of any near by communities, those ancestors as opposed to any 'victors'. These deposits, therefore, may mark a complex process by the hillfort community, or even a wider social community focused on the hillfort, who felt the need to abandon the site but retain a claim to it as some form of monument. As discussed above, these process appear to have been taking place in the later centuries of the Iron Age, a period of upheaval in settlement patterns, material culture, social organisation and social relations (Ch. 6). A period when relationships within and between social groups were being challenged by both internal tensions, potentially exacerbated by population growth, and external tensions of new lifestyles and pressure from communities to the east and the Roman world. Within such a context, communities may have felt the need to increase the visibility and size of existing ritual practices to emphasise community bonds particularly if these acts

(as discussed above) where a way of retaining social cohesion. This may have taken place even at a time when previously significant hilltop enclosures were becoming less densely inhabited (see Ch. 6 on Cadbury; Cunliffe 1995 on Danebury) but, as seen with the possible shrines at Danebury for example, retained a significance to a community dispersed in the countryside.

Hill (1995; 120 and fig. 12.1; 1996) has suggested a move to more defined places for ritual activity in the LIA, lessening the need to undertake symbolic deposition within the domestic sphere. The similarity of these deposits to the structuring of human remains on temple sites of later Iron age date in northern France may suggest that in some cases these hilltop enclosures had taken on slightly different roles. It has long been argued that hillforts performed symbolic roles in the community as well as settlement and/or storage roles and may even been foci for ritual. In these instances such roles may have become more central at a time when occupation was declining. These sites may have taken on roles similar to temple sites in northern France particularly, in an area of southern Britain where LIA 'temples' or shrines are hard to identify. The continuity of practices was maintained, however, to some extent perhaps in the face of the changing attitudes to ritual activity and burial practices seen in the LIA (Cunliffe 1991; Hill 1995). This can be to some extent paralleled by French temple sites where it has been argued that most of the remains at sites like Ribemont-sur-Ancre are of war victims deposited and treated in meaningful ways (Brunaux 1987). As with the 'massacre' deposits the remains from these sites are overwhelmingly dominated by adult males (Brunaux 1987; Verger 2000)<sup>64</sup> and also with differential treatment of certain body parts. In the case of the deposits in the region their generally late date<sup>65</sup> would appear to relate to wider tensions and upheavals in later Iron Age society further emphasising the state of flux of Iron Age communities and societies at large (see Ch. 6/8).

In all interpretations of these deposits the role of violence (and potentially warfare) in the later Iron Age should not be underplayed (James *forthcoming*) although the mode and meaning of such violence and whether perpetrated by the community itself or external forces has important implications on how we interpret such deposits. It seems increasingly clear however that such deposits cannot be regarded simply as war graves and, even if the result of warfare and deposition by external groups, they appear to have been deliberately structured to imply significance to a wider audience.

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<sup>64</sup> Although a dominance of adult males has been noted in other deposits, such as Danebury (Cunliffe 1984c; Cunliffe and Poole 1991, 424).

<sup>65</sup> And closer dating of the Bredon, Sutton and Worlebury deposits should be a priority for future analysis.

## 5.9 The role of non-human deposits in expressing social relations

There is insufficient data for a statistical analysis of structured deposits in the region although there is an increasing need to assess whether the patterns recognised in Wessex (Fitzpatrick 1994; Hill 1995) are mirrored in the rest of southern Britain. There is also a methodological problem in dividing animal and material culture deposition practices from human remains. Deposition from the region where human remains have been found associated with animal remains suggest that these items may have been part of some ritual rites. The types of animals in such deposits; the articulated bird skeleton at Worlebury, dog skeletons at Dibbles Farm and pike jaw at Salmonsbury may indicate that particular and special animals were selected for deposition with these remains.

The definition of what constitutes a 'structured' deposit has received great attention in Iron Age studies in recent years and in particular suggested that the deposition of almost all artefactual remains constituted part of structuring space and human relations (Hill 1995; Parker-Pearson 1996). With some deposits it is difficult to determine the nature of any symbolism. Cow skulls have been found in the backfilled enclosure ditches at The Bowsings (Marshall 1991), Roman Fields, Abbeymead (Atkin 1987) both of LIA/early Roman date which may suggest some form of terminal depositions with both enclosure ditches claimed as deliberately backfilled. Deposits in storage pits, similar to those in Wessex (Cunliffe and Poole 1991; 1992; Hill 1995), can be identified at Birdlip, where a dog skeleton was associated with a glass bead and pottery (Parry 1998) and at Dibbles Farm human skeletons were pits associated with two articulated dog skeleton in similarity with examples from Danebury (Cunliffe 1992). On present evidence it is difficult to accurately compare with rites elsewhere but generally deposition practices seem similar to those seen in other areas of southern Britain. In terms of structuring space the evidence is at present limited. Discussion of the use of metalworking debris and querns stones in symbolic locations on settlements is discussed in Chapter 7 and suggests that these particular items, with their special transforming roles, may have been singled out for particular deposition. The same has also been suggested above for some human remains. Other material it is less clear. At Ermin Farm (Mudd *et al* 1999), deposits in the terminal ditch of pottery and metalworking debris may emphasise the importance suggested for entrance ways seen elsewhere in southern Britain and suggested for the general deposition of metalwork and querns in the region (Ch. 7). Other deposits however, such as that at Birdlip appear to have no obvious spatial significance and until a larger corpus can be assessed few conclusions can be drawn.

## 5.10 Conclusions: treatment of the dead and implications for social change

One of the key issues in the nature of treatment of human remains in whatever form is the possibility of changes in burial tradition. Although broad scale changes in burial rites have long been recognised as reflecting wider changes in society (e.g. Hodson 1964), such as the move to excarnation in the LBA and adoption of cremation in the LIA, many of these processes may not be applicable or be more complex in the region. In addition, the possibility of changes between the earlier and later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC have been less studied or recognized.

Of the earlier sites it is notable that Crickley Hill has virtually no human remains save for one or two finger bones (see above). Considering the large area excavated we might expect such remains and the lack of human remains, is in contrast to the other large scale excavations from the region. Although purely taphonomic process cannot be ruled out, this may imply slightly different process of human disposal taking place, possibly with all remains excarnated and deposited 'off site' in contrast to the retention of some parts and individuals 'on site' at the later sites.

Most human remains appear to date from the later Iron Age, reflecting, to some extent, the higher visibility of this period from the earlier Iron Age in all aspects (Ch. 6). The later Iron Age date from many of the inhumations around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC in to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD however appears to mark an increasing trend continued in the LIA. As discussed above however human remain disposal was highly varied, including, 'pit' burials, deposition of individual bones in a variety of contexts and isolated on and off site inhumations. Although there is the danger of a circular argument, it may be significant that it is with the greater emphasis on storage pits and enclosure ditches from the beginning of the later Iron Age onwards in the region (see Ch. 3, 6) that deposition of human remains in such features also became increasingly prevalent.

In the LIA (around the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD) the most notable change is the appearance of 'rich' burials. Although relatively rare, their form and richness mark them out from previous burials. The most well known are the Birdlip burials comprising at least four burials of three males and a central rich female grave. Grave goods included a bronze mirror and brooches. On the brooch evidence it has been dated to the (early/mid) 1<sup>st</sup> century AD whilst the other possible 'warrior' burial, with a possible sword and bucket, may be somewhat earlier (Staelens 1982, 23) although others in the region also date to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (see below). Another burial

found near by at Crickley in the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been suggested as LIA (Staelens 1982, 27) although dating evidence is highly limited and it could be much earlier. The possible bucket rims from Rodborough common (Parry 1996a) might also indicate a high status burial in the area associated possibly with LIA settlement. Of probably similar date is the warrior burial at High Nash (Webster 1989; 1990; Hunter *forthcoming*) which includes a late La Tène, sword ring and shield boss of probably late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD date (Gwilt *forthcoming*). Potentially significantly, the burial appears to be in close proximity to a Roman temple (Walters 1992) although poor recording of the latter and a lack of dating cannot confirm a link. However, in line with the suggestion of more visible burial and ritual rites (Hill 1995, 120), the High Nash burial may provide a connection between the two.

Both the Birdlip and High Nash burials can be described as 'off-site' burials, somewhat in contrast to the majority of human remains in earlier periods. With the Birdlip burials topographic location was clearly important but their relation to surrounding settlement is unclear; the enclosure at Cowley (Parry 1998a) and re-use of Crickley (Dixon 1994) may well be contemporary but do not provide the high status sites, like Bagendon, where we might expect such burials.<sup>66</sup> It appears from these cases, however, that certain individuals were at last being singled out for highly prestigious burial and this has been taken by many to signal the emergence of an elite not present or less visible in the early and MIA. Whilst it is true that certain individuals were receiving more prominent burial treatment in the LIA it should be remembered that individuals had already been singled out for inhumation off site previously and whilst grave goods were far less prevalent this is in line with the different levels of material culture between the later and latest Iron Age (Hill 1995; 1997; Haselgrove 1997). Are we seeing practices which may be related but reflect a growing possession and focus on high status material culture – potentially marking a change in the way status was displayed: through prominent burial and consumption of lavish artefacts. This may be in contrast with previous high status individuals (or communities) who expressed wealth and status in different ways, possibly through land ownership, possibly explaining the focus on landscape boundary burial in the later Iron Age.

The lack of late La Tène cremations from the region, highlighted in Whimster's (1981, 150) distribution map, is still generally true. Examples may exist from the region but are poorly understood, with claims of LIA cremations from Camerton (Wedlake 1958, 41) associated

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<sup>66</sup> The massive enclosure at High Brotheridge has been suggested as possibly late Iron Age (Harding 1977; Staelens 1982, 25) but dismissed by RCHME (1976). Relatively close proximity to a large late Iron Age enclosure at Silchester has been noted at other rich mirror burials (Fulford and Creighton 1998).

with possible pre-Roman features, possibly from Barnwood (Clifford 1930) and a number also claimed from the area of the rectory at Bagendon, discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Rees 1932; Staelens 1982, 29). Again, it is impossible to verify and evidence from most recent excavations at Bagendon uncovered no Iron Age burials (Richard Reece *pers comm*) although there were a number of early Roman burials on site, one of which appears similar to the LIA or early Roman examples from Brockworth. The complexity and variability in the treatment of human remains still continued, however, with disarticulated remains of long bones and skulls, similar to earlier deposition practices, evident at Ditches and Bagendon suggesting that elements of the population continued to be excarnated. There is some evidence that such practices continued well in to the LIA and early Roman period with, for example, the human skull from an enclosure ditch at Herriotts Bridge; a typical 'Iron Age rite' in an apparently late 1<sup>st</sup>/ early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD context (Rahtz and Greenfield 1977, 383). This seems to match the evidence from the region of structured animal deposits in early Roman contexts; horse heads and cattle skulls for example from sites such as Abbeymeads in Gloucester (Atkins 1987). The continuity of such practices suggests that symbolic observances and expression of social relations were maintained in many instance in the face of changing material culture and even settlement form. Such persistence can perhaps be seen in the same context as the continued building of circular structures in the region throughout the Roman period (Mudd *et al* 1999; Richard Hingley, lecture).

The (limited) evidence for increasing inhumation in the later Iron Age compared to the LBA and EIA may suggest changing attitudes towards treatment of individuals. Whilst still marking presumably a minority of the population as a whole, sites like Salmonsbury, Beckford and the various isolated or 'off-site' burials alongside a growing record beyond the region, for example at Yarnton and Sudden Farm, appear to show an increasing number of inhumations, many arguably in prepared graves as opposed to 'pit burials'. In addition, within the latest Iron Age we see the appearance in the region of a handful of prestige inhumations, at Birdlip and High Nash, marking the burial presumably of high status members of society. To greater or lesser degree it is tempting to see this gradual re-emergence of the visibility of the dead as reflecting wider social changes and a perhaps increasingly more 'individualist' later Iron Age which seems increasingly apparent from the settlement record (see Ch. 6) and this may mark similar process.

It is dangerous to make too many assumptions on the visibility of the dead, however. Firstly, these rites still make up a minority of the population. Secondly, this change is primarily an archaeological phenomenon of visibility and we cannot be sure how such differences were viewed in the past. There is always the danger of anachronistically regarding inhumation as

somehow 'better' and of higher status but the opposite could well have been true (see above). Treatment of remains in other ways; excarnation and the retention of skulls for example, which were almost certainly displayed (Bowden and McOmish 1987), also entails that individuals (?) remained highly visible to the community, one might argue more so than with (unmarked) inhumations. In addition, it is impossible to be sure if those pieces retained, and later deposited in other contexts, were just some of the population, such as the elites, or those of high status. It is also apparent that excarnation or the retrieval and retention of some bones continued into the latest Iron Age. Carr (*forthcoming*) has stressed the similarities between cremation and excarnation, arguing that treatment was not altogether different. The converse may well be true however and such treatments can be argued to mark wholly different approaches to the body, particularly the lack or presence of disarticulation. The varying degrees of disarticulation with some remains suggests complex process of manipulating the remains. However we view these processes, contra to Carr's argument, the evidence from Bagendon, Ditches and Birdlip suggests that burial rites, or more accurately the treatment of human remains, was becoming more complex rather than less (cf. Hill 1995a, 120) and to homogenize such differences may be to mask varying attitudes towards different members of the community by the community. It is more difficult to see a direct relationship, however, between such practices and differences dependant on social stratification, religious adherence, illness, deformity, gender, age or local traditions. The complex evidence from human remain deposition lends increasing weight to the impression that over the later Iron Age there was an increasing pre-occupation with the individual and individual communities in expressing their identity and difference from each other. This need not be explained in terms of an egalitarian earlier 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC and highly stratified later Iron Age but that tensions over land ownership, identity and 'belonging' were increasingly central to communities identity and status.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Landscapes of Social Change**

The following chapter discusses some broader conclusions which can be drawn about the changing nature of Iron Age settlement patterns from information derived from aerial photographs combined with excavated evidence. This chapter will not only discuss and highlight local variation in settlement form and patterning, and histories of particular landscapes, but also establish whether broad similarities and patterns may be discerned. Are there, for example, common patterns of landscape change which can be identified on the local or regional scale (See Chapter 1) and what might these imply for the nature of landscape and social change within the study area and its place within southern Britain as a whole? For this reason, landscape organisation is discussed in broad terms on a regional basis, highlighting the nature of landscape/settlement patterns. Where relevant, different areas are discussed independently, and similarities or differences highlighted. In particular the north and south of the study area have been separated, partly because of their different landscapes. The implications for the nature of these landscapes, the differences between and within areas, and of change over time, are discussed in each section.

#### **6.1. Landscape evolution in the Severn-Cotswolds**

At present other, better studied, areas provide a more detailed picture of landscape change, against which to compare the Severn-Cotswolds data. Cropmark enclosures are often regarded as defined spatial entities and divorced from their wider role in the landscape. This has been exacerbated by excavation strategies that rarely investigate beyond the enclosure boundaries (Ch.4). The tendency to divorce so-called 'field systems' from settlements, and to see the former as somehow less important has led to a major indicator of the nature of social systems and inter-site relationships being ignored. The term field system is itself unhelpful, inadequately describing the integration of settlement and natural features (e.g. streams, hills) within wider 'lived' and working landscape. Recent studies have emphasised how such features contain meaning to both the individual and wider society (e.g. Tilley 1994, Basso 1999). Previous social and settlement analyses have consistently neglected the importance of the nature of the landscapes around, beneath and between 'settlements', leading to possibly misleading ideas on the nature of settlement patterns and social structure.

Examination of sites in and around the study area indicates that enclosure often existed within complex field systems, in some cases relating a number of enclosures to one other and incorporating a variety of other features, including trackways, linears and open settlements. Such landscapes have been better studied elsewhere in southern Britain (Palmer 1984; Cunliffe 2000; Taylor *forthcoming*). This relates less to a lack of preservation and has more to do with levels of research; evidence of complex landscapes are becoming more widespread from various areas including Worcestershire, south and east Cotswolds and the Severn valley.

The nature of such landscapes is extremely important in considering the social systems of these settlements and the inter-relationship between enclosures. In addition, even cropmark data may shed light on the nature and chronology of landscape evolution in various parts of the study area. The following examples represent case studies of complex Iron Age landscapes that have tended to be overlooked. Further examples undoubtedly exist and will emerge with a more detailed examination and integration of cropmark and excavated data.

A failing of many assessments of social organisation and landscape through cropmark data has been to neglect the chronological element. There has often been a tendency to regard Iron Age landscapes as static (e.g. Jackson 1999b). However by combining the cropmark and excavated data to examine broad landscapes, rather than smaller areas, we may begin to tease out the processes of the *long durée*; the developments and changes in society and landscape. Whilst the evidence from the region is far less robust, we can begin to compare it with better studied areas such as Wessex (e.g. Cunliffe 2000). At the same time, case studies of better studied areas may highlight differences, peculiarities as well as broader patterns in such landscape and settlement changes within and between regions.

### **6.1.1 Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age settlement and landscapes (Fig. 6.1a)**

Evidence for EIA settlement and landscape is severely limited, reflecting a comparable situation in other areas of southern Britain (e.g. Cunliffe 2000, 149; Champion *forthcoming*). This is in contrast to the wealth of material for the later Iron Age. However, comparison with material from beyond the study area, particularly areas such as the Thames Valley (e.g. Yates 1999; 2001), may provide a clearer picture of early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC settlement and landscape. Defining the LBA and EIA is chronologically problematic (e.g. Needham *forthcoming*). Many of the pottery types may have broad periods of circulation from the 10<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century BC with the added problems for radiocarbon calibration in the early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC. More nuanced changes and shifts in landscape use and settlement are thus difficult to

identify. However, as argued in Chapter 3, by using a broad chronology larger changes in settlement form and landscape organisation and society can nevertheless be discerned<sup>67</sup>.

#### 6.1.1.1 Upper Thames Valley

The upper Thames provides the most information on LBA and EIA landscapes. Large-scale stripping for gravel extraction has enabled unenclosed areas and broader landscapes to be examined. Unenclosed settlements of EIA date exist at Roughground Farm, Butlers Field and the Loders, Lechlade, in many cases associated with pit alignments and/or ditches. These sites comprise single roundhouses (most commonly post-built) situated in a landscape of field systems and land divisions, contrasting with the large spread of LBA, unenclosed roundhouses at Shorncombe (Fig. 5.2.3.1.1), which seems more akin to similar sites in the middle Thames Valley (e.g. Reading Business Park; Moore and Jennings 1992). It is not clear if this represents a real divergence between the LBA and EIA settlement or whether Shorncombe represents a larger settlement agglomeration rather than periodically shifting households (See Ch.5), but if so raises questions of the possibility of a move away from communal agglomerations to smaller (household scale) settlements in the EIA<sup>68</sup>.

Pit alignments of EIA date are commonly associated with such settlements, with excavated examples at Ashton Keynes/Shorncombe (Hey 2000); Butlers Field, Lechlade (Boyle *et al* 1998); Memorial Hall, Lechlade (Thomas and Holbrook 1998); and Roughground Farm, Lechlade (Allen *et al* 1993). In some cases it has been suggested that these pit alignments combined to form larger landscape divisions cutting off spurs in the river (Fig 6.1.1.2; Boyle *et al* 1998). Similar use of pit alignments to divide up the gravel terraces and delineate river bends has been noted both in the upper Severn (Wigley 2002) and in the Avon Valley (Hingley 1996). Their use to divide up the gravel terraces and floodplain areas, visible from cropmark examples in and beyond the study area (see Fig. 6.1.1; Webster and Hopley 1964; Hingley 1989; Wigley *forthcoming a*), suggests an association with use of these waterlogged areas. Evidence from the Thames Valley suggests that in a number of cases linears were formed by ditches on higher ground and pit alignments in low lying areas. One suggestion is that pit alignments were used to define territories on the floodplains where ditches were less necessary, or were intentionally designed to retain water (see below; Rylatt and Bevan *forthcoming*; Wigley *forthcoming a*).

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<sup>67</sup> Contra Needham *forthcoming*.

<sup>68</sup> Although, other early Iron Age sites in the Thames Valley, such as Ashville (Parrington 1978) comprise larger clusters of roundhouses and as such the ability to see any trend is limited.

The use of pit alignments to divide up these landscapes appears to be primarily an EIA phenomenon. Although some pit alignments in the region may date to the later Iron Age, this is inferred primarily on supposed association with later Iron Age features, for example in the Bredon Hill environs (Fig. 6.1.1) and at Condicote (Fig.6.1.1.3; RCHME 1976; Marshall 1989). Those with certain later Iron Age dates, at Ashton Keynes/Shorncote (Brossler *et al* 2002) and Preston (Mudd *et al* 1999) are better defined as segmented ditches, potentially indicating a difference in function for these structures in the later Iron Age (see below). Elsewhere pit alignments on the higher ground at Groundwell West (Walker *et al*2001) can perhaps be regarded as functionally distinct, forming an apparent boundary to the settlement, either as a precursor or contemporary to the associated linear. This association may not be dissimilar from Butlers Field, however, where a pit alignment and linear could be argued to form the 'boundary' of an unenclosed settlement.

#### **6.1.1.2 Severn Valley-Cotswolds**

The general lack of large scale gravel extraction in the Severn Valley may be one reason for the more limited knowledge of EIA settlement. Where such extraction has taken place, for example in the Aston Mill area, the keyhole excavation strategies used have been more successful in detecting linear features and enclosures characteristic of later Iron Age settlement patterns. The type of unenclosed settlements observed at Shorncote and Roughground Farm are generally absent. However, recent discovery of post-built roundhouses in an unenclosed settlement at Hucclecote, with radiocarbon dates indicating an 8<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century cal. BC date (Thomas *et al* 2003), suggests similar kinds of settlement to that at Shorncote in the Severn Valley in this period, which may relate to earlier Bronze Age and Iron Age finds in the area (Clifford 1933, 331). At Frocester there is some evidence of an EIA unenclosed settlement beneath the later enclosure, possibly related to a field system incorporating LBA linears. Elsewhere in the lower Severn, EIA material derives from Saintbridge (Darvill and Timby 1986) and possibly Crypt Grammar School, Gloucester (Dunning 1933) but amongst the field systems at Aston Mill there is a notable absence of EIA settlement (Dimm and Evans 1990). Recent investigation, however, at Dumbleton (Coleman *et al* 2003; Coleman and Hancocks *forthcoming*) have revealed a number of LBA and/or EIA pits and gullies, hinting perhaps at the ephemeral nature of settlement evidence in the area. This stresses the problems in identifying such features and associated settlements through keyhole excavation; often, as appears to be the case at Dumbleton, they have been truncated by later Iron Age and Roman field boundaries and enclosures. What evidence there is for EIA settlement in the lower Severn is associated with gravel terraces (see Ch. 4), possibly implying similar settlement organisation to that seen in the upper Thames Valley. Elsewhere,

LBA burnt mounds have been recorded at Sandy Lane (Leah and Young 2001), suggested elsewhere as potential feasting areas or sweat huts (Barfield and Hodder 1987), others (in the Thames Valley) have been shown to be associated with unenclosed settlements (Brossler 2001) of which Sandy Lane could potentially be one.

There is more evidence for EIA occupation of hilltop sites along the Cotswold ridge. The area around Bredon along the Carrant brook for instance (Fig. 6.1.1) is overlooked by a number of hillforts producing EIA material: Shenberrow (Fell 1961), Burhill (Marshall 1989), potentially Nottingham Hill (which has produced LBA metalwork) (Hall and Gingell 1975), whilst further south a number of the other promontory forts along the Cotswold ridge are of EIA date, including Crickley Hill (Dixon 1976; 1994) and Leckhampton (Champion 1976). In addition, a number of smaller (possibly unenclosed) sites of early date may also have existed along the ridge at Stables Quarry and Kings Beeches, Southam (St. George-Gray and Brewer 1904; RCHME 1976, 107). The lack of evidence for dense settlement in the valley, therefore, could imply some form of nucleation to hilltop sites in this period. The evidence from the Thames Valley cautions against such an interpretation and it seems more likely that EIA settlement merely remains undetected. However, the evidence from some excavations of a lack of settlement (and possibly exploitation) on the heavy clay soils in the EIA, after use in the Bronze Age, as for example at Tewkesbury (Walker *et al* 1997), should not be overlooked and the possibility of a short lived nucleation should be explored.

On the Cotswolds, EIA settlements are similarly rare. The large enclosure at Norbury-Northleach contains rectilinear structures which may be granaries but can also be compared to the domestic rectangular structures at Crickley (Moore 2003). Its size has led it be classed as a large hilltop enclosure, suggested elsewhere as of earliest Iron Age date (Saville 1983; Cunliffe 1991). Pottery from the site is undiagnostic and the absence of carinated and haematite wares, noted at sites like Crickley and Groundwell West, may suggest a slightly different date, perhaps contemporary with the use of the limestone tempered early-MIA wares. The A419/417 bypass produced no EIA or LBA finds despite a wealth of later Iron Age sites (Mudd *et al* 1999) and stray finds of early material on the Cotswolds remain limited to a few undiagnostic sherds. The early date for the Winson enclosure (Cox 1985), based solely on a La Tène I brooch, can be challenged, the Malvern pottery perhaps suggesting the brooch was curated. The conjoined and segmented enclosure at The Park has produced a radiocarbon date predating the associated roundhouse, of 785-420 BC (Marshall 1990, 2). The storage pit and potin coin suggest a later date for the site, however, and the segmented nature of the enclosure - although somewhat reminiscent of some early sites - has more parallels with the MIA segmented enclosure at Ashton-Keynes (Hey 2000).

Recent excavation of an apparently unenclosed settlement at Bourton-on-the-Water further emphasises the unenclosed nature of most settlement in the region (Piper and Catchpole 1996; Barber and Leah 1998; Nichols 1999; 2001). The location of the Bourton site reflects those in the Thames and Severn valley, situated on a gravel terrace above the floodplain of the river Windrush. The suggestion that the Cotswolds themselves, although utilised, may not have been densely settled in the EIA (Saville 1979; Darvill 1987), appears to be generally supported by recent work. If matching the unenclosed nature of settlement in the valleys, however, it is questionable as to how detectable such settlement is likely to be. On the west side of the Severn the evidence from Thornwell also suggests that LBA/EIA sites were generally unenclosed.

#### **6.1.1.3 Field systems**

On Midsummer Hill, Shire Ditch has been reinterpreted as potentially of LBA date (Field 2000) and this may be true of other similar linears, such as that on Icomb Hill (Darvill 1987, 121). In the Severn valley there is evidence that by the LBA the valleys had been divided up by large linear boundaries, as for example at Beckford (Britnell 1974), Wyre Piddle (Napthan *et al* 1997) and Frocester (Price 2000), supported by environmental data suggesting intense land use in the LBA<sup>69</sup> and matching evidence from the Thames Valley (Yates 1999).

There are a number of co-axial field systems in the Cotswolds but their date is open to question and on current evidence they could be anything from middle Bronze Age to Romano-British. The association of Aldsworth with barrows could suggest a Bronze Age date, although far later field systems in the region at Aston Mill and Preston (see below) also appear to respect barrows as land markers. Excavation of an apparent linear (field boundary) at Tormarton on the south Cotswolds (Osgood 1999) of middle Bronze Age date appears to indicate exploitation this early, although this feature is extremely short and not on the scale of the field systems at Aldsworth and Badminton.

#### **6.1.1.4 Social organisation in the earlier Iron Age**

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<sup>69</sup> Dates from Warwickshire suggest increased alluvium at Pilgrim Lock on the river Avon at 1300-600BC and, more distant from the study area, on the river Arrow in Redditch, of 980-810BC (Shotton 1978) both suggesting a late Bronze Age date. Brown (1982, 102), on material from close to Tewkesbury, suggests similar dates for maximum terrace clearance between around 1200BC and 800BC.

The social implications of the EIA landscape remain unclear. The existence of boundaries and field systems in the Thames Valley and possible continued recognition of some LBA features elsewhere, indicates that defining areas of the landscape, particularly on the gravel terraces of the major valleys was well developed. As discussed in Chapter 5, there was apparently an emphasis in both the LBA and EIA on defining areas of landscape, with both permeable and impermeable boundaries, whilst at the same time houses (and households?) appear less well-defined. Where boundaries occur around occupation sites, these appear to be predominantly larger hilltop enclosures. Few enclosed communities of EIA date have been noted, although there are exceptions at Groundwell West and Groundwell Farm which may have more in common with those to the south in Wessex (Cunliffe 1991; 2000) and West Wiltshire, for example the D-shaped enclosure at Longbridge-Deverill Cow Down (Hawkes 1994). As discussed in Chapter 5, however, even some of these 'enclosed' settlements such as Groundwell West and the recently excavated possibly LBA enclosure at Morton-in-the-Marsh (Neil Holbrook *pers comm*) have more 'permeable' boundaries of pit alignments and discontinuous ditches than the more well defined enclosures of the later Iron Age. Defining the early phases at Groundwell West as enclosed is somewhat problematic and the site may only have developed an enclosed element late in its life. The same cannot be said for Groundwell Farm, however, and indicates the potential variation in enclosure dates, particular in the very south of the region.

What this implies in landscape terms is unclear. Did communities in the earlier 1<sup>st</sup> millennium have less need to define themselves, either because of less tension over the ownership of land or a different way of managing and negotiating land tenure and use; perhaps at the large hillforts apparently occupied in this period? The explanation of some of these as large communal storage centres (Cunliffe 1991, 348) should also not be dismissed. The topographic location might also support a role for a wider community. The importance of hillfort location in identifying their function has been noted elsewhere (Hamilton 2002). The topography of Nottingham Hill, for example - domed in the centre and visible from some distance across the valley - may suggest that some of these sites acted as meeting places and/or storage centres for a more dispersed population in the valleys. This need not necessarily indicate that ownership was communal in the early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium but implies that communities expressed ownership and use of space in different ways. In addition, we need not infer an egalitarian EIA; if differential house size is used to imply variation in status<sup>70</sup>, then those at Hucclecote and Crickley may suggest some form of hierarchy on both enclosed and unenclosed settlements.

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<sup>70</sup> Obviously controversial; alternative interpretations are discussed in Chapter 5.

## 6.1.2. Later Iron Age landscapes (c.4<sup>th</sup> c BC-1<sup>st</sup> c AD) (6.1b)

The majority of cropmarks (particularly SRE and rectilinear form) examined in Chapter 4 are plausibly of later Iron Age date (Ch.3). Combined with a growing excavated data-set, a much fuller picture of the nature of landscape organisation can be discerned for this period. Models of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds and upper Thames suggested a picture of isolated enclosures independent from each other on the Cotswolds, with unenclosed spreads of settlement in the upper Thames Valley, representing a far more integrated set of communities (Hingley 1984a, b). The proposed dichotomy between settlement patterns and social forms envisaged for the Cotswolds and upper Thames has been the focus of debate on social organisation both in the region and beyond (Haselgrove 1984; Hill 1999), to which can now be added a growing awareness of settlement patterns elsewhere (Hingley 1989; 1996).

### 6.1.2.1 *Settlement organisation on the Cotswolds*

Existing models of settlement patterning on the Cotswolds and elsewhere in southern Britain have suggested isolated enclosures, independent from one another, engaged in the Germanic, household-scale mode of production, by and for the household or extended kin group exclusively (Hingley 1984a; Ferrell 1995; Hill 1996)<sup>71</sup>. The concentration on excavating the interior of enclosures, at the expense of studying the landscape as a whole, has tended to reaffirm the impression of enclosures as discrete entities (e.g. Marshall 1996). There is growing evidence, however, of enclosures as part of more complex landscapes integrated into field systems and potentially more related to other enclosed communities.

### 6.1.2.2. *Landscapes on the Cotswold dip-slope*

Around the recently excavated enclosure at Preston [52], cropmarks and excavation have revealed a number of other features including enclosures and linears, including an apparent segmented ditch (Fig. 6.1.2.1a,b). Its constituent sections appear to relate to one another, forming (presumably) a boundary feature stretching for c.700m in a NW-SE direction. At one location the feature appears to respect a pair of Bronze Age barrows which are thought to mark a slight re-alignment in the direction of the linear (Mudd *et al* 1999, 40). The linear itself was dated to the MIA, with radiocarbon dates from the middle section and the smaller segmented section to the south giving dates somewhere between the 4<sup>th</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC.

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<sup>71</sup> Although see Hingley 1999, 244-245 for further discussion on the potential complexity of the Germanic mode of production model.

This suggests the linear was contemporary with the Preston enclosure which has provided a radiocarbon date of 403-96BC. The linear may also relate to an apparent field system just to the north (RCHME 1976, 95). This field system also appears to respect two circular ring ditches, presumably barrows, and is related to a number of additional enclosures, one of which is polygonal. The respecting of barrows as landscape markers is seen elsewhere in southern Britain (see below). In one location only a short stretch of a segmented ditch was investigated (Mudd *et al* 1999, fig. 3.5). This appears to be the result of sections joined together to form a larger linear. Although there appears to be some overlap in one section (Mudd *et al* 1999, 40) the linearity of the structure as a whole implies it was planned or maintained as a single feature. The segmented nature of the linear might imply gang construction, representing the work of smaller groups on a larger landscape boundary, as has been suggested elsewhere for hillfort and enclosure construction (Gosden *forthcoming*; Wigley *forthcoming b*). If this was the case, it has far reaching implications for the way in which social groups interacted, perhaps suggesting that landscape division was carried out by different groups working together to undertake separate sections. Only one section was fully uncovered, measuring approximately 60m, with another to the south apparently of a similar length. Although it is impossible to be certain about the construction method, the possibility of 'gang' construction and the existence of standard lengths of work should be considered.

Similar segmented ditches of MIA date occur to the south at Shorncote on the gravel terraces, forming what appears to be part of a field system (Brossler *et al* 2002). The function of these features remains enigmatic, but the presence of similar land-division at Shorncote indicates that segmented ditches were a common feature. Elsewhere in the upper Thames, later Iron Age segmented ditches occur at Sherbourne House, Lechlade (Bateman 1996) and have also been recorded in the Severn Valley at Hortham Hospital [114] dated to the later Iron Age. Elsewhere in the MIA segmented ditches appear to have been used to form the boundaries of enclosures, for example at The Park (Marshall 1996) and at Ashton Keynes/Shorncote (Fig. 6.1.2.2; Hey 2000).

Segmented ditches appear to be a generally later phenomenon than the EIA pit alignments. The extent to which this represents a real divergence in their chronology and nature is uncertain, and raises questions over the morphological differences between the two. Further study is required of the relationship of pit alignments to segmented ditches and other linear features. At Condicote (Fig. 6.1.1.2; RCHME 1976) and Roughground Farm (Fig. 6.1.1.3), pit alignments were not used exclusively and (as at Preston and Shorncote) were incorporated into field systems alongside ditches. It is suggested elsewhere that linears in some cases

replaced earlier pit alignments (Boyle *et al* 1998). The later date of these segmented ditches may imply they represent a later form of boundary, and some similarities with pit alignments in some of the sections may indicate some affinity of function. If there was a move away from pit alignments, as a generally early phenomenon, to segmented ditches (sometimes as a re-working of existing pits alignments) and then to linears, this has wide implications for both the functional and cognitive changes in these features: did new farming regimes require more distinct boundaries or was it part of a wider phenomenon of defining territorial boundaries around communities, moving away from the more permeable pit alignments?

The 'function' of segmented ditches is uncertain. Mudd (1999) claims they may be quarries, but their organisation suggests a role for dividing up the landscape. Like pit alignments, the apparently permeable nature of the boundary implies a not necessarily purely functional purpose. One suggestion may be the separation of areas of ownership, rather than stock control. Elsewhere, pit alignments and linears have been claimed to divide off river spurs (Hingley 1989; Boyle *et al* 1998; Wigley *forthcoming a*) or define floodplains (Rylatt and Bevan *forthcoming*) (although these are generally of EIA date, see above). The role of the 'H' shaped arrangement to the northern end of the linear is even more uncertain. Again, Mudd (*ibid.*) argues quarrying but does not explain why these should form such a distinct shape. Possible agricultural functions, such as dividing sheep for culling, could be hypothesised, but are uncertain and indicate how little is known of many Iron Age structures.

### ***6.1.2.3 Enclosure Clusters on the Cotswolds***

In addition to field systems, a number of parts of study Area 1 appear to have distinct clusters of settlement, such as those in the Birdlip-Brimpsfield, Guiting Power and Temple Guiting areas (Figs. 6.1.2.3/4). Variability in visibility across the study area, resulting from soil differences and flying patterns may be a factor, but widespread flying over the region and large areas of the Cotswolds being under the plough, suggests that these clusters are real entities (Mark Bowden *pers comm*). It could be argued that these represent communities periodically shifting across the landscape. Whilst there is some indication that enclosure communities did move, as at Birdlip (Parry 1998a), in all excavated cases these appear to be over long chronological time-frames, like the shift from the early-MIA agglomerated settlement at The Park to the later Iron Age enclosure at The Bowsings. Many excavated enclosures were occupied for generations (e.g. Frocester, Birdlip) and even those in close proximity could be contemporary (e.g. Beckford I and II). The number of roundhouses/phases or ditch re-cuts are unreliable methods of assessing length of occupation. The possibility that many of these clusters represent contemporary communities in close proximity and the

parallel implication of less-densely settled areas of countryside must be considered, as must what this means in terms of the nature of landscape and social organisation. Such clusters are not restricted to the Gloucestershire Cotswolds and similar complexes in Oxfordshire, some associated with field systems, have been recorded through aerial photography (Featherstone and Bewley 2000, 24) suggesting similar social groups.

These clusters vary in nature and do not necessarily represent the same landscape use or types of communities. Many may have long histories. Temple Guiting, for example, undoubtedly includes Romano-British features, but only through detailed examination of larger landscapes will a clear picture emerge of these features' relationship to the later Iron Age settlements. If we accept that even some of the enclosures at such sites are contemporary, it implies that enclosures may have clustered together in certain areas (*contra* Hingley 1984a; Hill 1999; but cf. Hingley 1999 on Stanton Harcourt area). This may be the result of a number of factors including practical considerations such as favourable soil conditions (4.4.2), access to a variety of resources (the situation of the Birdlip-Brimpsfield group at the head of a number of valleys could support this), and social relationships between communities. Might they, for example, represent the spread of related groups (perhaps offspring), setting up communities nearby?

Whatever the exact character of these clusters, they have implications for the nature of society in these areas. In the Birdlip area for instance, the enclosures at Birdlip, Stockwell, Highgate and Brimpsfield (Fig. 6.1.2.3), assuming they are contemporary, must have interacted. No linears can be seen to join these enclosures as part of a field system although this may be due to a lack of investigation or preservation. Alternatively, the lack of defined field systems might suggest a different kind of social interaction and land division from that at Preston or in the Severn valley at Aston Mill (see below).

In addition to the clusters of enclosures noted above, more amorphous spreads of enclosures have been revealed, for example at Cold Aston, which has yielded fieldwalking finds of later Iron Age and Roman pottery (Marshall 1999, 176). One of the irregular enclosures contains a single silo pit similar to other enclosure noted in the north Cotswolds (see Ch.4). It is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of such spreads but, again, the impression that enclosures were not discrete landscape entities is reinforced.

#### ***6.1.2.4 Settlement organisation in the Severn and Avon Valleys***

Until the late 1960s the Severn and Avon valleys were regarded as largely unsettled in the Iron Age, with occupation restricted predominantly to hillforts (Chapter 2; Britnell 1974). Since then a wealth of information in the form of cropmarks and from a range of excavations indicates that these valleys were in fact densely occupied. The environs of Bredon Hill in particular provide a well studied area with a wealth of cropmarks, excavations, evaluations and stray finds (Fig. 6.1.1), comparable with evidence from the Severn and north Avon valley (e.g. Whimster 1989; Hingley 1989; 1996). The gravel terraces above the Carrant Brook provide the clearest indication of settlement density and organisation, with enclosures related to linears and trackways representing wider landscape organisation (Webster and Hobley 1964; Oswald 1974; Britnell 1974; Dinn and Evans 1990). The features seem to represent a field system with enclosures integrated with trackways and linears dividing up the landscape. The entire system appears to be roughly orientated on the axis of the brooks descending from Bredon Hill to the Carrant Brook, with enclosures clustered on the gravel terrace above the brook. The linearity of the system parallel to the brooks suggests that each site had separate areas for lowland exploitation and upland use, possibly split between sheep and cattle. The evidence of some (undated) pit alignments on a similar axis implies that these were used to define the floodplains as part of this same land division (Fig. 6.1.2.5/6). Although the field system was almost totally un-investigated (Dinn 1990, 22) its relationship with the two MIA enclosures implies contemporaneity.

To the east of this field system is the rectilinear enclosure at Beckford (Oswald 1974), apparently also related to other linears and land divisions beyond the excavated area, and other agglomerated enclosures and linears close by (Britnell 1974). Both of these have evidence of occupation throughout the later and latest Iron Age implying contemporaneity at least at some stage in their histories. Although only subject to limited investigation, the area represents another example of a highly structured system of land division dating to the later Iron Age.

This is by no means the only example of enclosures integrated into a more developed landscape (although it may be one of the few cases where hilltop enclosures also formed part of this landscape rather than being distinct entities). Recent geophysics and excavation at Throckmorton to the north of Bredon Hill indicate similar landscapes to that at Aston Mill, with enclosed settlements situated in a wider landscape using brooks as landscape divisions. The existence of Bronze Age field systems also recalls Aston Mill and may imply a similar landscape division (see below). Elsewhere cropmarks indicate many enclosures adjacent to linears, many of which stretch for substantial distances. At Kemerton, a trackway stretching for at least 1km (in places paralleled by a pit alignment), is abutted by at least three or four

separate enclosures, one of which is conjoined with internal enclosures (Fig. 6.1.1A). A similar pattern can be seen at Hafford (6.1.1B): a linear running roughly parallel to the Avon river, is abutted by at least four SRE enclosures with an SRE, bivallate and multivallate circular enclosure nearby. Such complexes are undated, but the presence of roundhouses in some, and similarities in form to examples from elsewhere suggest they are of later Iron Age date, and further demonstrates the incorporation of enclosures into larger systems of landscape division. The number of enclosures in the Avon and Severn Valley reflects the picture along the Warwickshire Avon (Hingley 1989; 1996) and highlights the apparent difference between this area and the Upper Thames Valley which is dominated by unenclosed settlement. This may relate to different perceptions of space or community and stresses that similar topographic locations do not necessarily lead to similar settlement morphology.

The relation of the hilltop enclosures at Conderton, Bredon, Oxtenton and possibly Elmely to this system is uncertain. Bredon Hill (Hencken 1938) and Conderton (Thomas *forthcoming*) show evidence of only MIA occupation, with MIA pottery also from Oxtenton (The Knolls) (Saville 1984). It seems unlikely that the far smaller enclosure at Conderton fulfilled the same function as Bredon Hill. Conderton's location above this system of land division and at the head of one of the feeder brooks may imply it was somehow integrated into the land division, perhaps focusing on upland sheep and exchanging with the more cattle-orientated lowland sites. The similar size of Conderton to some of the low-lying enclosures might also imply a similar status or function (Fig. 4.2.6.1a). The environmental evidence from Conderton and the low lying settlements at Beckford and Aston Mill does not provide an altogether clear answer to the relationship between these sites (Iles and Clark *forthcoming*). However, the higher proportion of pig bones at Conderton suggests woodland in the vicinity and there is a marginally higher proportion of sheep at the site, perhaps suggesting exploitation of upland woodland for pigs and upland grazing for sheep there, whilst the lowland sites accessed the gravel terraces. It is uncertain that cattle or sheep were exchanged between settlements, but the contrasting environments of these settlements, coupled with the presence of sheep and cattle in high numbers at both, could imply exchange and/or co-operation in farming regimes.

The integration of these sites into a wider field system suggests some form of communal use and presumably layout. Although the layout may have been created organically rather than simultaneously, it does imply the construction of enclosures and field boundaries as part of a wider constructed and organised landscape. The field systems noted at Aston Mill reflect similar field systems being noted at a variety of areas across Britain. As yet it is impossible to show if a similar situation existed in the study area. However, as shown for Teesdale (Moore *forthcoming c*) the concept of isolated enclosures may not hold true and the only reason why

enclosures in the region have not yet been shown to be integrated into wider field systems. may be poor preservation and the inability to disentangle a variety of linears into a coherent field system.

Pit alignments are also relatively common in the Severn and Avon Valley but none have been published. Those known from cropmarks confuse the picture from the upper Thames, in some cases apparently related to enclosed settlements, for example at Strensham (Parry 1998b) and Charlton (Webster and Hobley 1964) and a number of sites in Warwickshire (Hingley 1989), possibly implying a later Iron Age date for at least some. In some cases the location of pit alignments appears to respect modern field boundaries (Webster and Hobley 1964). This coincidence may imply some continuity in landscape division from the M-LIA, and has been noted elsewhere in the region (Webster and Hobley 1964, 21; Bowden *pers comm*) and beyond (Wilkinson 1987; Moore *forthcoming c*).

#### ***6.1.2.5 Enclosure Clusters in the Severn and North Avon valleys***

The cropmark evidence from the Bredon environs indicates that enclosures were commonly clustered in groups of two, three or more. Such clusters occur in a number of locations around Bredon Hill (Fig.6.1.1; Webster and Hobley 1964) as well as further afield, as at Broadway (Fig.6.1.2.5), where at least five single and bivallate enclosures are situated within a discrete group with associated smaller enclosures and trackways, an area which has produced both Iron Age and Roman material (Smith 1946). At Kempsey (Fig. 6.1.2.5), two bivallate enclosures occur close to one other with another to the south revealed through geophysics. The latter appears to be linked to a linear ditch and other potential settlement enclosures. Like many settlement complexes in the region, the cluster is situated on the Severn gravels. The form and location of the Kempsey cluster resembles that at Beckford. Similar clusters of settlement close to the major rivers are apparent at Evesham where the smaller enclosure is particularly similar to that at Beckford (Fig.5.2.2.2.4). Such smaller enclosures may have performed a similar role to the smaller internal partitions visible at a number of rectilinear enclosures throughout the northern study area (see Ch. 5).

The location of these enclosure clusters may also be important in both their role and perception of space. Like enclosure clusters noted along the Warwickshire Avon (Hingley 1989; 1996), a number are situated in river bends, for example at Kempsey, the linears cutting off such spurs using the river as an additional bounding feature. The use of brooks as field or territorial boundaries has been suggested for Aston Mill (see above). In such instances the role and meaning of bounding or enclosing individual units within such areas becomes further

complicated and may reinforce the concept of defining households within a wider community. In addition, the potential existence of another bounding level may further blur the classificatory and cognitive differences between agglomerations such as Beckford (Fig.4.2.4.1) and enclosure clusters.

From these clusters it appears that we may have two (not mutually exclusive) community types in enclosures situated in broader landscape. These discrete clusters of enclosures may represent potentially larger social units or communities who periodically shifted their enclosure within a relatively defined area. Conceptually at least, these clusters need not be dissimilar to the kind of integrated communities suggested for the unenclosed communities in the upper Thames valley or the 'agglomerated' settlements at Beckford (Britnell 1974) and Stanway. The use of enclosures to isolate discrete activity areas and possibly household groups seems to have been an essential element of settlement complexes at both types.

The density of settlement features in these valleys supports the notion of a landscape where negotiation over land rights, mutual boundaries and access to resources was paramount to communities. It is only in those areas which have both a combination of detailed cropmark data and excavated material, such as the Bredon Hill environs, where the nature of such settlement density and landscape can be discerned. Fieldwalking finds and evaluations in the Bredon Hill area indicate that further enclosures and settlements existed across a wide area and were potentially extremely dense (Fig. 6.1.1). These include a later Iron Age settlement at Dumbleton (Coleman *et al* 2003; Coleman and Hancocks *forthcoming*), along with earlier finds from the area (Saville 1984; Marshall 1990a). 'Middle' Iron Age pottery has also come from pits and other features in the Alstone area (GSMR15413/15427; Cox 1985), a number of sites around Wormington [45] [150] (Marshall 1990a) and Aston Somerville (Brett and Coleman 2000) [205].

A range of clusters and individual enclosures exist within the area, with double-ditched enclosures to the south of Evesham and elsewhere, similar to those at Broadway and further north. At Sedgeberrow a potential ritual site has been suggested, associated with what may be Roman and/or Iron Age cropmarks (Buteux 2000) and even a possible square barrow (Coleman and Hancocks *forthcoming*). The west of Bredon Hill has been investigated less, but stray pottery finds have been made in the Strensham area (Jackson *et al* 1996) and cropmarks reveal a variety of undated enclosures - both in clusters and isolated - some associated with pit alignments and field systems (e.g. Parry 1998b). Elsewhere, agglomerated settlements of smaller enclosures and trackways exist at Hailes-Stanway, which yielded later Iron Age pottery as well as Roman material (Clifford 1933; Webster and Hopley 1964). Such

agglomerations are not that dissimilar to the unenclosed complexes of the Thames Valley but also may have had similarities to the spreads of enclosures and other features noted at Broadway and Beckford, highlighting difficulties in defining classificatory differences. Most of these sites provide evidence of occupation/activity in the later Iron Age, stressing an extremely high density of settlement between the 4<sup>th</sup> c BC- 1<sup>st</sup> c AD, potentially as dense as present settlement.

There is no reason why similar densities of settlement should not have existed further south in the Severn Valley. Clusters of enclosures also appear as cropmarks in the Gloucester area, for example at Longford (Fig.6.1.2.5), despite the thicker alluvium here. There is no reason to suggest settlement was different from the Bredon environs, with probable later enclosures at Frocester and elsewhere. In addition, there are examples of what might be termed 'unenclosed' roundhouses in smaller enclosures, for example at Abbeymeads (Atkin 1987), more akin to settlements such as Claydon Pike in the Thames valley or Evesham and Beckford to the north. It is unclear at present if such later Iron Age unenclosed settlements are more common in the Gloucester area than the Bredon environs, or whether this is a result of differential fieldwork.

#### **6.1.2.6 Conclusions**

The evidence from the Severn and lower (north) Avon areas suggests that by the later Iron Age these river valleys were densely settled and divided up by large scale field systems into an organised landscape (Fig. 6.1.2.6). At Aston Mill, individual enclosures had access to the Carrant Brook and flood plain grazing. Pit alignments sometimes divided up the flood plain, where they may have been intentionally used to fill with water, when in flood, to demarcate the limits of the floodplain, either as a territorial or symbolic role (see Rylatt and Bevan *forthcoming*). Elsewhere, the field system or natural features divided up the gravel terraces. There may even have been access to (communal?) rough grazing of the Bredon Hill slopes, although other hilltop enclosures such as Conderton may have been the prime utilisers of these areas. In amongst these field systems existed a combination of discrete enclosures and clusters. This suggests inter-related communities similar to those in parts of the Cotswolds. Although the dating evidence is insecure, excavation and stray finds imply they are later Iron Age. Whilst not all these enclosures were necessarily contemporary, many are likely to have overlapped and it seems unlikely that each enclosure represents a separate phase of occupation. The enclosure clusters and their apparent relationship to large scale field systems implies that communities were involved in a well developed system of land tenure.

Another element which requires more assessment is the involvement of hilltop enclosures in this landscape organisation. On Bredon Hill and along the Cotswold ridge there is evidence that hillforts were contemporary with the field systems and enclosures - potentially three (contemporary?) hillforts were situated above the field systems - yet there is no obvious evidence that they controlled or dominated the lowland field systems. What was the relationship between these communities and those in the low-lying valleys? Evidence from Conderton suggests that communities in the smaller hilltop enclosures were not vastly different from those in the valleys. Others, however, may have had a role as focal settlements; the possibility that the 'massacre' deposit at Bredon represents a ritual deposition (see Ch. 5) might even suggest the site had a ritual role for the wider community.

#### *6.1.2.7 Relationship of Later Iron Age settlement and landscape to earlier (late Bronze Age/early Iron Age) landscapes*

A hazard in assessing the nature of landscape and settlement patterning in later prehistory is that of divorcing these landscapes from earlier land-divisions and landscape features and the effect these had on communities' perceptions of the landscape, community histories and their sense of place (cf. Bruck and Goodman 1999, 9; Bradley *forthcoming*). Evidence from the region stresses the relationships between later Iron Age land use and existing monuments, field systems and landscape divisions. The nature of this relationship and whether it represents direct re-use, continuity or appropriation of a mythical past needs further exploration. The nature of such relationships may further explain the apparent changes in settlement form and landscape organisation that occurred in the later Iron Age. There is growing evidence from the Severn valley in particular of direct relationships between middle or later Iron Age enclosures and the landscape divisions of the LBA. This has major implications for the nature of social and settlement change in the mid 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC and its relation to earlier settlement and land division. Although it is dangerous to generalise about landscape evolution based on limited data, a number of suggestions may be made. Where there is sufficient evidence, such as Preston and Aston Mill, the integration of enclosures into field systems appears to have taken place in the later Iron Age. However, there is evidence that land division in some areas had earlier antecedents in the form of linears and pit alignments. As discussed above, by the LBA and EIA such linears were dividing up large tracts of the gravel terraces of the Severn, north Avon and Thames valleys.

A number of the later Iron Age enclosures in the Severn valley show evidence of construction related to earlier land use. In some cases the existence of this LBA land organisation, in the form of linears and barrows, is seen purely as coincidental, but in others it may indicate

fundamental relationships between these later Iron Age developments and earlier land division.

The enclosure at Frocester provides the clearest evidence of a relationship between a LBA field system and a later enclosure. A LBA linear divides up the gravel terrace, later abutted by an EIA trackway (Fig 6.1.2.7; Price 2000). Around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC a rectilinear enclosure was placed over this node in the existing field system. There is little evidence of direct reuse of the linear but a small gully from the rear of the enclosure ditch recut the LBA ditch emphasising reuse and recognition of this feature. There is also indication of a possibly unenclosed EIA community in the area. A concentration of early-MIA limestone tempered pottery at the junction of the linear and trackway and EIA rectangular structure suggested to the excavator EIA occupation beyond the excavated area. In addition, it appears that a large roundhouse may have been missed, situated below the enclosure ditch, potentially indicating an earlier unenclosed phase to the settlement (Fig. 5.2.2.2.1).

The evidence from Frocester suggests that around the beginning of the later Iron Age an existing, unenclosed community or a new community from elsewhere felt the need to emphasise its place in the landscape with the construction of a rectilinear enclosure. Pertinently, this enclosure was constructed over what appears to have been an important node in existing landscape divisions which had been in use since the LBA. The unusually high pottery deposition here (Fig.6.1.2.8) may not just suggest occupation nearby (Price 2000) but - given the symbolic importance of high levels of deposition in later prehistory (e.g. Hill 1995) - indicate the importance of this node to the community in defining and affirming land control and tenure.

Whether or not this marks direct continuity is perhaps less important than the implication that this community was utilising earlier land divisions which held meaning either through continued functional use or as symbolic boundaries. The developments at Frocester have wider implications. Firstly, that EIA communities in the Severn Valley may have occupied relatively ephemeral unenclosed settlements (in this case, largely obliterated by the later enclosure) which are difficult to detect archaeologically, supporting the limited evidence from elsewhere (see above). Secondly, that EIA communities respected, reused or at least recognised the LBA land divisions. Most importantly, these land divisions appear to have remained significant in the later Iron Age; potentially so much so that the community felt it necessary to emphasise its ownership (?) of the landscape by constructing an enclosure over an important land node.

The occurrence of enclosures at the junctions of existing, earlier land divisions has been noted elsewhere. At Maxey in the East Midlands, for example, Taylor (1997) noted MIA enclosures positioned in relation to earlier land divisions and at nodes in existing field systems. Taylor (1997, 202) saw this as a similar process of boundary definition in the MIA. Here too, the process of placing enclosures in such locations may have wider significance for the changes in land tenure and perceptions of space at the beginning of the later Iron Age (c. 4<sup>th</sup> c. BC). Why, for instance, did this community (along it seems with others in this period) feel the need to emphasise their own boundedness through the construction of an enclosure? Did the positioning of this enclosure at an earlier landscape node emphasise ownership and had land tenure continued from the earlier Iron Age? Taylor (*ibid.*, 202) suggested that such enclosures may represent meeting places for “exchange or communal rituals associated with the maintenance of tenurial limits or social obligations”. Whilst it seems at Frocester the enclosure was also a domestic settlement there is no reasons to suggest that it too couldn’t have had similar roles in facilitating exchange (Ch. 7) and social negotiations. However, such an explanation still does not fully reveal why such locales needed to be defined in the later Iron Age. It may imply a greater pressure on land, leading to an increased need to undertake negotiations over tenure and exchange.

The relationship between later Iron Age enclosures and earlier land boundaries is not restricted to Frocester and may be suggested at a number of sites in the Severn Valley. At Wyre Piddle [168] and Beckford II [209], later Iron Age enclosures are related to LBA linears. At Beckford, the later Iron Age enclosures are situated adjacent to the earlier Bronze Age ditches (Fig. 5.2.2.2.4). This location is unlikely to be coincidental and emphasises a control or relation to existing systems of land organisation. Such relationships between later Iron Age enclosures and earlier linear land divisions are not restricted to the study area and have been noted further up the (north) Avon valley at Barford, Park Farm, where the 5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> century enclosure is situated adjacent to an earlier linear, although it is debatable whether this is early Iron Age or later (Fig. 6.1.2.9; Cracknell and Hingley 1994, 10), with further potential examples suggested from cropmarks (Hingley 1996). Such relationships have also been noted in the in Welsh Marches (Wigley 2002). In all cases the juxtaposition of later Iron Age enclosures and earlier landscape features, many of which are likely to have remained visible, is unlikely to be coincidental and suggests these communities felt the need to associate themselves with these earlier features.

This is not to suggest direct continuity or universal association between later Iron Age enclosures and field systems and the Bronze Age or EIA landscape. Elsewhere, for example in the Aston Mill field system (Dinn and Evans 1990), there is little evidence for EIA land

division or use, although this may be due to a lack of recognition rather than genuine absence. Even in such areas, however, there is some recognition of the Bronze Age landscape, with for example barrows amongst the Aston Mill field systems with some indication that these may relate to the alignment of the linears (Fig.6.1.2.10). To what extent this represents a form of continuity or merely use as land markers, as with the recognition of barrows at Preston noted above (Fig. 6.1.2.1), is unclear, but the role of such earlier monuments must be explored. The use of barrows in relation to field systems has been recognised at a number of other locations on the Cotswolds, for example at Little Solsbury hillfort (RCHME 1976, 104) and the co-axial field system at Aldsworth (Fig. 6.1.2.11; RCHME 1976).

Some of the hillforts in the region may also have been sited to dominate earlier linear boundaries. Recent survey at Midsummer Hill (Field 2000) and the Herefordshire Beacon (Bowden 2000) suggests that the Shire Ditch, previously thought to be medieval, is overlain by the hillforts and thus predates them. Herefordshire Beacon is undated but Midsummer Hill appears to be no earlier than 5<sup>th</sup> c BC (Stanford 1981). This, and the morphological similarity of this linear to ones in Wessex and the Marches, suggest a possible LBA date. Could the imposition of these hillforts therefore mark a control of a LBA territorial boundary? It seems likely that the Shire Ditch, which follows the crest of the Malvern Hills, was a territorial marker rather than a 'field boundary' and its prominent location may have ensured that dominance of it was important. The placement of hillforts to dominate earlier land divisions has long been noted in Wessex (Cunliffe 1991; 2000) as well as in Herefordshire (Jackson 1999) and on the Marlborough Downs (Gingell 1992; Mark Bowden *pers comm*). The placement of hillforts in such locations reinforces the impression that these features remained important territorial markers, which it was considered essential to dominate at the beginning of the later Iron Age, just as the Frocester enclosure was placed over earlier land divisions. Whether an act of dominance, expression of ownership or to mark meeting places on the peripheries between territories is difficult to say, but this reinforces the idea that earlier land division remained significant in the later Iron Age and that physically expressing relations to those boundaries was extremely important.

The recognition of earlier land division by later Iron Age communities is less direct in the upper Thames Valley. At Shorncote a 'middle' Iron Age enclosure is situated across an EIA pit alignment (Fig. 6.1.2.2; Hey 2000). There appears to be more evidence of definitively EIA landscape division and settlement in the Thames valley. Evidence for the relationship between LBA/EIA land division and later (middle) Iron Age settlement is perhaps less clear-cut, however, and Yates (1999), in particular, has stressed the abandonment of Bronze Age field systems in the middle Thames Valley throughout the Iron Age.

There is limited evidence in the upper Thames, however, that earlier landscape boundaries remained significant in the consciousness of later Iron Age communities and that the recognition of earlier land divisions may not have been restricted to the placement of settlement enclosures. At Roughground Farm, a burial placed within the top of a silting up EIA ditch was radiocarbon dated to 350-40 BC (Ch. 5; Allen *et al* 1993). It seems that the EIA ditch remained significant in the later Iron Age to a community whose settlement lay beyond the excavated area. This further emphasises that earlier land divisions had significance to later communities, potentially as functioning land divisions (as much in marking territory as field boundaries) and that communities felt it important to emphasise this through the disposal of their dead within them (cf. Ch.5). The extent of continuity in the communities themselves and their conceptual understanding of such acts remains speculative, creating further debate over the apparent dramatic changes seen between earlier and later Iron Age societies.

#### **6.1.2.8 Conclusions**

Around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (and later?) when enclosures appear to have emerged, communities felt the need to position themselves in proximity to existing landscape divisions seemingly for control of these features. The evidence for continuity from a LBA landscape through the EIA, even at sites like Frocester, remains limited, although it seems plausible that the enclosure communities were EIA communities who already existed in the area but whose settlements have been less easily detected. However, Yates (1999), in his study of Bronze Age field systems in the upper Thames valley, emphasised discontinuity of use in the Iron Age, as has Lambrick (1992, 83) for settlement. It is debatable whether the limited evidence from the Severn and Avon valleys implies greater evidence of continuity and as such a potentially different history of land tenure and community development. It is pertinent here to discuss what is meant by continuity: in those cases outlined there is little apparent evidence of the earlier land divisions being recut during the EIA and only at Frocester is there a direct reuse in the later Iron Age. However, there is evidence, supported by the ditch burial at Roughground Farm, that these features remained significant, visible elements, either effective landscape boundaries or perhaps as symbolic land divisions emphasising the ancestral community's (or a mythical community's) ownership.

One of the greatest problems with this picture of continued landscape use is the apparent hiatus in land-use between the LBA and later (middle) Iron Age in the Severn Valley. The problems with dating LBA and EIA sites, along with the probable ephemeral nature of EIA

settlement, suggest this absence may be more imagined than real. This has important implications. If EIA communities inhabited an existing landscape of LBA field boundaries, matching what appears to be the case in the better studied Thames Valley, then the enclosures and field systems of the later Iron Age do not mark re-colonisation of these valleys but potentially the affirmation, through enclosure, by existing communities of their place in the landscape.

### **6.1.3. Later Iron Age communities in the Cotswolds, Severn and Thames Valleys**

Growing evidence suggests enclosures were integrated into wider field systems. As elsewhere in Britain, enclosures were not only related to field systems, but in some cases linears continued and integrated other enclosures, perhaps defining larger landscapes. In some cases certain areas of the landscape appear to have been the foci for clusters of settlement indicating that enclosures on the uplands were not always the discrete, independent communities envisaged by Hingley's social model (Fig. 5.1.1.2/3) but in a number of cases were integrated into wider communities. This reflects in some ways Ferrell's (1995) analysis of Iron Age settlement in north-east England. She suggests that whilst enclosures (of individual households) represent "complete and independent productive units" (Ferrell 1995, 136) they were integrated into larger social units for shared activities. This appears to be the case in the Severn-Cotswolds, where enclosures were related to each other for the purpose of harvesting, marriage, ritual practices, enclosure rebuilding, ditch digging and so forth. The limited botanical evidence from just beyond the region also suggests that enclosure on the uplands co-operated in agricultural processes. The seed assemblage from Rollright, for instance, has suggested to Stevens (1996), that such enclosures "were involved in inter household co-operation with more widely dispersed households [presumably in other enclosures] and [or] possibly hillforts". Further assemblages are required to determine whether this is a common pattern but if so the data appears to support the settlement patterns in implying greater co-operation between enclosures in the later Iron Age. In contrast some of the earlier sites show less evidence of co-operation (for example, Groundwell West; Stevens and Wilkinson 2001), although whether this has more to do with local subsistence regimes rather than chronology is as yet unclear. Rather than completely dismiss Hingley's models, however, it may be better to accept that enclosures may often fit better with his model B (Fig.5.1.1.3) as part of larger communities. Even so, social relationships were undoubtedly more complex than even this model might suggest.

A number of issues arise from the relationship of field systems to enclosures. As noted above the questions of chronology are complex but have important social implications. In some

cases at least, such as Frocester and Beckford, it appears that enclosures were constructed in relation to existing boundaries. The respecting of the barrows seen at a number of other sites may also indicate that earlier monuments were respected as landscape markers. Hingley (1999, 242) has suggested that earlier monuments in the Stanton Harcourt area acted as a focus for later settlement, but the area of Neolithic monuments was not occupied, stressing the extent to which MIA activity did not work in a vacuum from previous land organisation. In the Severn-Cotswolds it is difficult to ascertain in most cases whether later Iron Age land division marks the affirming of earlier, less permanent, boundaries or the need to construct new, more defined land divisions.

The organisation of the landscape and settlements also has wide ranging implications for the nature of social organisation, group identity and relations between and within social groupings. Evidence from other areas of Britain, such as Teesdale (Moore *forthcoming c*), imply that there was at least co-operation between enclosures in order to maintain an integrated field system even if each group held independent areas. A similar pattern might be envisaged for the Aston Mill/Bredon Hill environs (Fig. 6.1.2.6). Many of the coaxial field systems throughout the study area must also imply such co-operation considering their scale, for example that at Aldsworth (Fig. 6.1.2.11), which would have been beyond the capabilities of individual settlements. In such cases the organisation of these systems may imply larger group decisions.

The clustering of enclosures has implications for the way in which later Iron Age society operated. The long held view of independent communities no longer seems universally appropriate and instead enclosures may have been involved in a variety of social networks. Such a picture does not underplay the importance for each household or kin group of the formation and symbolism of its enclosing boundaries. However, it does suggest a more complex set of relationships between groups on varying levels, including the household, kin group and wider community which better explain a more complex and apparently planned landscape than has been suggested by previous perceptions of the Cotswolds (Jones 1979, Hingley 1984a). Present understanding of Iron Age societies makes it very difficult to assess how settlements and groups interacted. Evidence from some of the material culture, including pottery, querns and briquetage suggest relatively long distance exchange networks (Ch.7). The implications for social networks of these exchanges however are little understood. There is little concept of the possibility and nature of wider social systems beyond the individual

settlement but the need for resources, including widening the genetic pool, must have required interaction with other communities<sup>72</sup>.

The anthropologist, Grøn (1991, 106), has suggested that communities *physically* segregated from one other, far from being isolated, are commonly more interactive than communities where households are closer together, with greater contacts with outside communities. Put simply, the isolated household needs wider contact with external groups in order to facilitate a variety of social requirements including continuing the group through reproduction beyond their community, exchanging surplus for material unable to be produced by the household and (perhaps importantly for enclosures in the Iron Age) to carry out tasks beyond the ability of a small group, including perhaps harvesting and refurbishment of buildings and boundaries. The maintenance of field systems and enclosure boundaries was probably beyond the scope of the household community and required outside help. As well as refurbishment, perhaps at certain times of year, such periods may have been essential in negotiating community 'spirit' and identity; for feasting and meeting marriage partners. There is significant ethnography for such occasions from a range of contexts (Newby 1995; Johnson 1997) and such processes have been suggested for other areas of Iron Age Britain (e.g. Chadwick 1997; 1999; Taylor 1997). The enclosures, therefore, had wider social links. These requirements may have been important in forming strong social bonds between households and communities who were spatially quite distinct. Such bonds may be seen through the exchange of material artefacts. The requirements of these enclosures beyond their own resources led to a need for querns, pottery and so on from long distance, again possibly indicating their ability to engage in wide social contacts beyond their immediate vicinity. This has wide ranging implications for the roles and means of production and exchange in social relations discussed in Chapter 7. In short, these communities were by no means isolated and in the roots of their physical separation it may be easier to see their ability to engage in much wider social organisation that were not required to operate in purely physical terms of proximity.

Assessment from this study, which includes possible Iron Age sites from both cropmarks and excavation, indicates a densely settled landscape at least by the later Iron Age. This mirrors other studies which have shown a high density of settlements in areas of Britain that were previously believed to be sparsely settled (e.g. Jackson 1999b; Moore *forthcoming c*). Chronology of the cropmarks is too vague to enable the creation of chronological densities of settlement. However, elsewhere I suggest that site coverage varied throughout the region in time and space, and that the concept of dense coverage across the landscape often implied for

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<sup>72</sup> Although McOmish (2001, 76) claims that enclosures had "a degree of self-sufficiency"

the later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC may be too simplistic. Other areas, however, particularly the Bredon Environs, stress that site density and land use was maximised in the later Iron Age.

If we accept the existence of clusters of enclosures, we may also have to accept that certain parts of the landscape were less densely settled, or even devoid of settlement. It was suggested above (6.1.1) that certain areas of the Cotswolds lacked *permanent and visible* earlier Iron Age settlement, where the number of cropmark sites is also low. Across the Cotswold plateau as a whole, a tendency towards location along the edge of the main valleys can be noted. The exceptions appear to be the banjo enclosure complex at Northleach and the LIA sites around Bagendon.

The picture is undoubtedly complex, but the observation that certain areas of the landscape were utilised in different ways and did not have dense settlement on them seems valid. This contradicts the widely held view that by the MIA all southern Britain was densely settled. Even allowing for the limitations of the evidence, we must surely accept that some areas of the country did not contain dense Iron Age settlement. This does not mean that these areas were not utilised or that they remained wilderness: they may have been used for other purposes; including transhumance, hunting, communal land and so forth.

#### **6.1.4. Developments in the latest Iron Age (1<sup>st</sup> c BC-1<sup>st</sup> c AD)**

##### ***6.1.4.1 Introduction***

The picture of landscape change in the latest Iron Age is more difficult to assess. There is some evidence to suggest that some field layouts were abandoned in the LIA. A general lack of LIA wares from the Aston Mill area for instance has been claimed as representing a shift from the later Iron Age enclosures and field systems along with the abandonment of Conderton Camp. At Conderton the final phase of the hut sites with articulated sheep on the house floors (Thomas *forthcoming*) suggests an organised (and ceremonial?) abandonment and closure of the site by the community with an implied move to settlement elsewhere. Why such a move should take place is not immediately obvious and its date in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC does not appear to match other settlements in the valley. In other cases the apparent absence of LIA activity may be the result of chronological imprecision in pottery dating as suggested in Chapter 3. Certainly elsewhere in this area elements of other field systems appear to show a greater sense of continuity into the LIA, with early Severn Valley wares present and possible re-cutting of later Iron Age trackways and linears (e.g. Coleman *et al* 2003; Coleman and Hancocks *forthcoming*). Evidence elsewhere also suggests that some of these enclosures were

still in use in the latest Iron Age and were using wheel thrown wares; at both Beckford sites there is some evidence of occupation in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Further south, Frocester clearly continued in use, presumably with its associated land organisation, into the Romano-British period. The picture may be varied, however, with possibly some changes in the nature of land organisation in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD in certain areas perhaps reflecting a subsequent social re-organisation.

However, it difficult to ascertain to what extent the field systems identified at a number of locations were in use or remained visible in the latest Iron Age. In a number of cases, they were apparently not replaced in the Roman period, suggesting that by the later 1<sup>st</sup> century AD these land divisions were no longer relevant. This contrasts with the apparent fossilised field systems in East Anglia (Williamson 1987) which seem to have remained as significant land boundaries into the Roman period. In the Thames Valley, Lambrick (1992, 83) has noted a shift in the location or replanning of settlements around the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, for example at Claydon Pike, with others abandoned prior to the advent of wheel thrown wares, such as Mingies Ditch. How accurate this picture of a general upheaval of settlement in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC is remains unclear, but it may mark less chronologically distinct periods of shift by individual settlements. However, when matched with the emergence of other settlement forms, such as Salmonsbury etc, and evidence elsewhere this period can still be regarded as a period of changing settlement relations.

#### *6.1.4.2 Banjo enclosures*

An element of the landscape which requires further discussion is the banjo enclosure. The distribution indicates that banjos tend to cluster in certain locations and are often situated within complexes of other enclosures of varying forms. Such complexes occur at Ashton Keynes (Fig. 6.1.4.1), Barnsley (Fig. 6.1.4.2) and Northleach-Broadfield, all of which possess a variety of other enclosures and trackways. The latter complex is the most striking example of this phenomenon and raises a number of issues about the roles of banjo enclosures within wider landscape organisation. Here, a number of banjo enclosures cluster with other sites, including linears and other enclosures (Fig 6.1.4.3). This includes [1/131], [1/132] and [1/133] with a complex of related linears. The wider area is dotted with sites and what appear to be related field systems. Although not all necessarily contemporary, the similarities between them imply some possibly larger unit of settlement and organised land use. The banjo enclosure discovered by Darvill and Hingley (1982; Fig. 4.2.5.1) links up with a linear connected to [1/133]. It would thus appear that banjo enclosures were part of organised landscape divisions rather than isolated settlements (*contra* Darvill and Hingley 1982).

Another example recently photographed near the complex of sites at Broadfield, Northleach, shows possibly two banjo enclosures (1/134), close to a circular, perhaps palisaded enclosure. The banjo shows similarities with Nettlebank copse (Cunliffe and Poole 2000a), again with related linears suggesting part of a complex farming system.

The reason for the clustering of banjo and other enclosures in this location is uncertain. Analysis of the soils in Chapter 4 indicated that the area does not appear to be a prime farming area. However, the location of the Northleach complex on the plateau, with access to the well-watered River Leach valley may suggest they are accessing both landscapes, using the valleys for cattle pasture and the upland plateau for either sheep grazing or arable, much like modern land use. The overall distribution of banjo enclosures appears restricted to the interface between the Cotswold uplands and upper Thames valley (See Fig 6.1.4.4), perhaps indicating either a cultural restriction or a particular subsistence role. The possible stock corralling role of these sites has frequently been claimed (Perry 1986) and there is some evidence that other LIA sites specialised in horse rearing (Cunliffe and Poole 2000b; Creighton 2000), including possibly Thornhill Farm, Lechlade (Miles 1984; JD Hill *pers comm*), although there is no firm evidence for such specialisation from any of the sites in the region.

Some of the complex irregular enclosures noted in the survey may also have affinities with the banjo enclosures, for example Sapperton/Frampton Mansell (1/52) and Avening (Fig.4.2.3.1, 1/67). Frampton Mansell in particular has possibly yielded both Dobunnic and Corisolite coins (RCHME 1976, De Jersey 1994; 1997), suggesting a LIA date. The complex enclosure at Eastleach-Turville (Fig. 6.1.4.6; Darvill 1988) also shows some affinities with these enclosures and also appears to be related to a banjo enclosure to the south. Like the banjo enclosures, no irregular enclosure has yet been excavated in the region and they require further fieldwork. However, the form of the antenna ditches may indicate similar roles. This phenomenon is not restricted to the region and can be seen at other banjo enclosures to the east in Oxfordshire (Featherstone and Bewley 2002), Dorset (Barrett *et al* 1991) and Hampshire (Corney 1989; 2002). The form of the banjos in many cases reflects that seen in Wiltshire and Hampshire with complexes of enclosures and trackways creating complex inter-related features. These complexes move away from many previous descriptions of banjo's role and divide them from other enclosures (*contra* Hingley 1984a), indicating they were part of inter-related systems as seen elsewhere.

#### ***6.1.4.3 Relation of Banjo enclosures to Roman villas***

The cropmark data also appears to indicate a relationship between banjo enclosures and Roman villas. This can be seen at a number of sites and may have implications for their role and status in the latest Iron Age. The small number of banjo enclosures in the region and the frequency with which they appear in the vicinity of villas is unlikely to be coincidental. Sites close to villas exist at Lasborough (1/13), Barnsley (1/141), Hazleton-Hockberry (1/74, 1/70) and Bagendon and may exist elsewhere.

At Lasborough the banjo enclosure is situated approximately 500m east of the unexcavated villa at Westonbirt-with-Lasborough (RCHME 1976, 123). The area close to the banjo enclosure consists of numerous enclosures and a number of stray finds of Roman material derive from the area (RCHME 1976). The evidence from the banjo enclosures at Barnsley is also interesting. The banjo (1/141) is situated around 500m south-east of the Roman villa within a landscape of various undated enclosures (Fig. 6.1.4.2). The first phase of the villa at Barnsley was originally dated to c.140AD (Webster 1981, 1982), suggesting the enclosure is unrelated to the villa. However, Iron Age pottery and a Dobunnic coin come from the site (Webster 1982, Saville 1984). In addition, the site contained a number of circular structures interpreted by Webster (1981) as cattle pens which should be reinterpreted as roundhouses. Whilst these may be later Roman, they could indicate LIA activity in the vicinity of the villa. The banjo at Hockberry [1/174] and Rodmarton noted by Darvill (1988), also appears to be situated in the vicinity of Hockberry villa, partly excavated in 1800 (RCHME 1976, 98). The villa is said to have produced early imported pottery (including Arretine ware), potentially indicative of LIA/early Roman activity, although few records remain (Clifford 1961, 211; RCHME 1976). Another banjo enclosure has been noted a kilometre west of the site at Hazleton (1/70).

There is tentative evidence of a banjo enclosure within the Bagendon 'enclosure' (Fig. 6.1.4.5) which if so may represent a similar phenomenon. A number of other early villas have been shown to relate to LIA sites, for example at Ditches (Trow 1988) and Withington (Time Team); both could conceivably represent a similar relationship between high status LIA and early Roman sites. The antenna ditches at Ditches (Fig.6.1.4.7) may suggest that it represents a site that had some similar roles (in stock corralling?) to some of the banjo enclosures despite its morphological differences. Elsewhere, Frocester also contains an early villa in relation to a LIA settlement. This site is a rectilinear enclosure not a banjo and may indicate that the relation was a complex one related to later developments of the settlement. However, the complex nature of the Frocester enclosure compared to many rectilinear enclosures may explain why the settlement became an, admittedly impoverished, villa site. The banjo

complex at Ashton Keynes (1/268:1:2:3) has yet to reveal any Roman material although cropmarks just to the north indicate a possible Roman farmstead.

The other possible exception is the larger Northleach cluster of banjo enclosures noted above. Although a villa is known just to the north of Northleach (RCHME 1976, 87) this seems too far away to be related to the complex, although further fieldwork is required to examine this area in more detail. One aspect of the Northleach complex is its proximity to the Roman road (Fosse Way). The proximity of large banjo complexes to Roman roads has been noted in Hampshire and Dorset, at sites such as Gussage Cow Down (Fig. 6.1.4.6; Corney 1989; Barrett *et al* 1991). It may also be pertinent that the Roman road at Ermin Street cuts across the LIA enclosures at Duntisbourne Grove and Middle Duntisbourne (Mudd *et al* 1999), which are likely to have still been visible (although not necessarily in use). The meaning of such relationships and whether beyond the purely coincidental are unclear, but potentially imply either the importance of such complexes in the immediate pre- and post-conquest period and/or could be seen in terms of control and domination over them by the Roman administration. The relation between these settlements and landscapes is discussed in more detail below and in Chapter 8 but has implications for the nature of these communities and their relationships with the Roman world.

The evidence for the relationship between banjo enclosure complexes and early Roman villa sites is at present sketchy, but initial study suggests it reflects a comparable situation to that in Dorset and Wiltshire (Fasham 1987, 63; Corney 2002) where large banjo complexes and villas have been noted. The growing evidence appears to indicate some form of relationship that necessitates explanation. If banjo enclosures represent high status sites, possibly engaged in particular agricultural practices, their relation to villas may indicate a similar situation at sites such as Ditches and Withington, with high status LIA sites developing into early Roman settlements.

#### ***6.1.4.4 Role of Oppida in landscape change***

Many discussions of the LIA have regarded the emergence of the 'oppida' and related enclosed sites with imported material as fundamental in interpreting landscape and social change (Haselgrove 1987b; Cunliffe 1991; 1994). A fuller discussion of the meaning and place of these sites and the influences/reasons for change is undertaken in Chapter 8, however, they cannot be ignored in assessing the nature of landscape change in the latest Iron Age. Defining and discussing such sites is fraught with difficulties. In the region a variety of sites have been ascribed the term, including the Bagendon/Ditches complex (Clifford 1961;

Trow 1980; 1990), Salmonsbury (Cunliffe 1991), Weston-under-Penyard (Jackson 2000), Minchinhampton (Clifford 1937), and Gloucester (Hurst 1999), as have sites just beyond the study area at Grims Ditch (Hingley and Miles 1984; Trow 1990; Cunliffe 1991), Abingdon (Allen *et al* 1997), Dyke Hills (Cunliffe and Miles 1984), Hob Ditch (Hingley 1996) and Worcester (Cunliffe 1991, 171). A cursory examination reveals the diversity of these sites and they certainly do not all represent the same phenomenon (Collis 1984; Woolf 1993; Hill 1995b), potentially the only commonality being evidence for activity just prior to the Roman conquest.

Study of Bagendon area raises a number of issues (Fig. 6.1.4.8). Firstly, there is little evidence of early or middle Iron Age activity. Dating evidence from the Ditches is hard to push earlier than the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC whilst the 'middle' Iron Age tradition pottery from Bagendon and the Duntisbourne sites is associated with LIA material of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Clifford 1961; Mudd *et al* 1999) and the inhumation at Lynches is possibly 1<sup>st</sup> century BC date (see 5.6.1). In addition, despite apparently favourable cropmark conditions and intense flying, the number of enclosures from the immediate vicinity of Bagendon is less than many areas on the Cotswolds (see Ch. 4). (This need not mean that none exist, but suggests at least that this may not have been one of the areas of dense MIA activity). Bagendon, therefore, (possibly in common with some of the banjo complexes) may have emerged in an area of landscape not occupied by the dense clusters of later Iron Age settlement discussed above. This is not to argue that later Iron Age settlements did not exist nearby (see Chapter 4; Fig. 4.1.4.2) nor that this area of the landscape was completely unutilised, but that the intensity of land use now apparent for other areas was not evident here.

The emergence of 'oppida' in areas where earlier activity and settlement are more amorphous is not restricted to this region, and has been suggested for many British oppida (Hill 1995b) and may be the case for some continental examples. Several studies have noted for example that Verulamium appears in an area of the landscape with sparse evidence for MIA occupation (Haselgrove and Millett 1997; Bryant *forthcoming*). The suggested reasons for this are varied and complex, including expansion into previously marginal areas as part of a wider agricultural expansion (Haselgrove and Millett 1997, 283), the exploitation of route nodes (Cunliffe 1988) and the emergence of new groups in areas away from existing social groups (Hill *forthcoming*). It is also possible that such oppida were located in the landscape away from existing social groups to act as meeting places, as suggested for the lake villages (Millett 1990; Haselgrove and Millett 1997, 285; Sharples 1991c).

Like Verulamium, Bagendon covers a large area perhaps spread out for different functions. Previously its development has been regarded as organic; beginning with an early focal point at Ditches, with the Bagendon dykes as a later addition (Trow 1982; 1990; Cunliffe 1994, 75). The discovery of the enclosures at Duntisbourne suggest that more occupation and activity areas await discovery and that it might be better to regard the area as a spread of activity and occupation without necessarily a central focus.

This is not the case with Salmonsbury where there is evidence of unenclosed settlement of early-MIA date nearby (see above) and 'middle' Iron Age pottery from beneath the rampart (Dunning 1976; Marshall 1978b), although the extent of any hiatus between these and the occupation of Salmonsbury is uncertain. Salmonsbury consists of a large enclosure with associated annexe (Fig. 6.1.4.9), with evidence for some internal division within the larger enclosure, possibly representing separate working or household areas (see 5.2.5.3). This may suggest that it is more akin to the nucleated sites seen in northern France, for example Villeneuve and Condé-sur-Suippe, where there are indications that communities continued to operate independently despite occupying a larger enclosure (Fig. 6.1.4.10; e.g. Haselgrove 1996b), as recently suggested for Abingdon (Allen *et al* 1997). Some of the limited environmental evidence from Abingdon might support the notion that some such sites represent the nucleation of wider communities as opposed to central places. Stevens (1996) has suggested there is less evidence for the kind of co-operation in crop-processing seen at enclosures like Rollright and hillforts such as Danebury. Instead, a more household-based approach, possibly matched by the dispersed (but dense) nature of EIA settlement at Abingdon, with a continued household-level approach to crop processing in the later Iron Age. If such a picture is correct then it perhaps fits better with Collis' (1984) nucleation model for some oppida: of communities moving into a larger enclosed area, yet retaining household divisions within the community. Further work is required on sites around Salmonsbury to determine if this is the case but the unenclosed early-MIA communities suggested in the Bourton vicinity (6.1.1.1), may have nucleated into a large enclosure in the LIA.

Previous models have seen Salmonsbury (and Ditches) as representing enclosed oppida as an earlier development. Dating of Salmonsbury, however, although earlier than Bagendon, suggests contemporary occupation as well and it may be better to regard such sites as having slightly different functions and histories rather than necessarily as part of the same social and settlement developments. A common feature of these sites, which has been regarded as fundamental to their development, is their location on route nodes (Haselgrove 1976; Trow 1990; Cunliffe 1991; 1994): Salmonsbury on the confluence of the Windrush and Dikler and

Bagendon close to the confluence of the Churn and Coln. To this can be added their location on the interface of topographic zones; between the 'upland' Cotswolds and the Thames Valley and potentially 'cultural' and economic zones (see Chapter 6 and 8). In the past this has been used to argue their development as emporia between the more Romanised 'core' of the south-east and the western periphery. Arguing that these sites emerged entirely based on influence from elsewhere is evidently over-simplistic, but it does seem likely that their location on potentially pre-existing exchange routeways, was significant.

Other sites in this category are harder to define. The suggestion that the accumulated evidence of LIA activity in the Gloucester area, at Kingsholm (e.g. Garrod 1987), Hucclecote (Clifford 1933; Sermon 1998), possibly Barnwood (Clifford 1930) and Abbeymead and Saintbridge (Atkin 1987) represents an oppidum or similar site (Hurst 1999) is difficult to confirm. The variety of evidence and its wide distribution suggests instead perhaps a range of existing LIA settlement in the area (located on the gravel terraces in particular) when the Roman fort at Kingsholm was constructed. There is limited evidence that some of this latest Iron Age occupation may have been of high status, with currency bars from Hucclecote (Sermon 1998). Elsewhere however, the sites at Abbeymead and Saintbridge appear to be no more than LIA unenclosed settlements. The arguments about the focus of early Roman military sites close to important socio-political centres (Creighton 2001) need to be borne in mind, however, and Kingsholm's location as purely tactical may be too simplistic. Elsewhere in the Severn, however, it seems that in the latest Iron Age any sites the advancing Romans (or ourselves) might have perceived as 'high status' may have continued from existing later Iron Age enclosures (e.g. Frocester and Beckford II) and need not have been located at a specific 'oppidum'. The suggestion that Minchinhampton represents an oppidum (Clifford 1937; RCHME 1976) is also difficult to confirm. Examination of the earthworks suggests that, although some are likely to be later prehistoric, they primarily represent a field system and medieval wood enclosure boundaries (Parry 1996a; Moore *unpub fieldwork*; T. Darvill *pers comm.*). However, the presence of LIA/early Roman settlement in the Rodborough area seems likely (Clifford 1937; Parry 1996a), supported by LIA metalwork finds, although of exactly what form is uncertain.

Weston-under-Penyard has also been suggested as having some of the characteristics of an oppidum (Jackson 2000) especially the high density of coinage<sup>73</sup> (Van Arsdell 1994). There is little understanding of activity in the vicinity prior to the conquest, however, and only the rectilinear enclosure at Great Woulding can be suggested as LIA (Jackson 2000). As with

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<sup>73</sup> Although many are old finds and as such potentially unreliable.

other potential 'oppida', the site may have developed in the conquest period as a response to Roman activity rather than from an existing power centre. It seems that control of local resources (i.e. iron ore, querns) in the area was indirect (if any firm control by a hierarchical power existed at all: see Ch. 7) and the development of Weston-under-Penyard may mark a change in the nature of control over such resources and power bases in the region. Further work on the nature of control over such resources (also true of lead production in the Mendips) in the early Roman period and their relationship with any existing Iron Age control, requires further work but there appears to be a pattern whereby the nature of control shifted in the latest Iron Age, although whether prior to Roman influence, or as an indirect or direct consequence of it is currently unclear. It is uncertain whether sites like Weston-under-Penyard represent power bases for either the 'Dobunni' or local chieftains, but their role and location suggests they were intimately bound up with changing modes and control of production and exchange and *potentially* as elite power bases.

#### ***6.1.4.5 Changes in social organisation in the latest Iron Age***

It is difficult to be certain what changes to landscape and settlement organisation took place in the latest Iron Age and it is perhaps dangerous to generalise across the northern part of the study area, or even in the Cotswolds. The creation of the Bagendon complex, which included not just the large dyke-system but, slightly earlier perhaps, the antenna enclosure at Ditches and the enclosures at Duntisbourne, alongside potentially some of the banjo complexes, suggests some radical change in settlement in those areas. The extent and nature of existing later Iron Age settlement is not entirely clear due to a lack of detailed work on the environs of Bagendon and on the date of the banjo complexes. However, the apparent absence of middle (later) Iron Age features detected on the Cirencester bypass (Mudd *et al*1999) in the vicinity of Bagendon, and the presence of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD activity at the Duntisbourne sites in particular, may imply a somewhat limited level of occupation in the centuries preceding the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. This may suggest that the complex was deliberately constructed in a part of the landscape where previous settlement density was low, at least compared to parts of the northern Cotswolds, the lower Severn and north Avon valleys and the upper Thames. As already indicated, this need not mean that such areas were 'empty' in the preceding centuries, but that the area potentially had other functions, perhaps, for example, used seasonally or for ritual purposes. What this means in terms of the community at Bagendon and its relation with other later Iron Age communities is discussed further in Chapter 8 but its location away from existing settlements clusters and power centres, such as the major hillforts of the later Iron Age can be explained in a number of ways: as representing the emergence of new elites,

constructing a centre away from existing power centres, or marking a new community developing away from the constraints of existing social systems and landscapes.

The same may perhaps be said of the large banjo complexes, although again a lack of fieldwork constrains interpretation. To what extent these complexes emerged from clusters of existing settlements (either of banjo form or other) into LIA settlements is unknown. Certainly, 'middle' Iron Age material has been retrieved from examples in the Oxfordshire Cotswolds (Copeland 2001), and in Hampshire (Fasham 1987; Collis 1994; Cunliffe and Poole 2000a), but in almost all cases they show evidence of intensive LIA occupation, and the complexes most similar to those in the study area have been suggested as flourishing in the LIA (Corney 1989; Barrett *et al* 1991). Further work is required but it appears that the banjo complexes were similar to the so-called oppida, and both represent communities (or parts of communities) which were key in adopting Romanised life-ways.

#### **6.1.5 Later Iron Age landscapes on the west side of the Severn**

Only a small proportion of the study area lies to the west of the Severn, including the area up to the Usk river. The settlement patterning here is more difficult to establish because of the limited cropmark potential of much of the area and restricted excavation (see Chapter 2). That said, the area to the south of Herefordshire in Monmouthshire and Newport appears to have a very different settlement form from east of the Severn.

One notable feature is the number of earthwork enclosures which survive (Fig. 6.1.6.1). These vary in form, although there is a tendency to irregularity. It is unclear exactly how many of these are Iron Age, although in many cases comparison with cropmarks and other dated examples suggests they are of 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC date. An additional problem is the description of many of these sites as 'hillforts' (Forde-Johnson 1976; Jackson 1999a), seemingly based on their survival as earthworks which would actually be better classed alongside enclosures (Fig. 6.1.6.1). Partly because of the boundary between Wales and England, there has also been a tendency to isolate the south Wales material from that of west Gloucestershire and Herefordshire (e.g. Savory 1980), without examining whether this really reflects a real 'cultural' divide as is often suggested (Savory 1980, 304; Jackson 1999a).

The enclosures in south-east Wales vary considerably from those in the Severn Valley and Cotswolds. There is far greater tendency to irregular and curvilinear shapes. Also notable, despite the small sample, is the variability in entrance orientation: the apparent tendency to an east facing orientation seen in Area 1 and reflected generally in the Severn Valley and

elsewhere is not so apparent here (Chapter 4). These differences may be the result of a number of factors and, as noted above, the chronology is open to question and some enclosures may not be Iron Age.

Earlier Iron Age settlement in this area is poorly understood, but excavations at Thornwell (Hughes 1996) and Trostrey (beyond the study area) (Mein 1998; 2000) indicate LBA/EIA settlements positioned on hilltop locations but potentially without enclosing boundaries. Elsewhere, in the levels (Whittle 1989; Bell *et al* 2000) and at Caldicot Castle Lake (Nayling and Caseldine 1997), LBA trackways alongside a large LBA metalwork corpus (e.g. Burgess 1980<sup>74</sup>) suggest intensive activity, although the nature of settlement activity is less certain. Twyn-y-Gaer (Probert 1976) also suggests that some of the hillforts may start early, but generally the region appears to largely lack the kind of large, LBA/EIA enclosures such as Nottingham Hill, Bathampton and Norbury in the Cotswolds.

The excavated evidence for later Iron Age settlement patterns consists of both enclosed and unenclosed settlements and 'hillforts'. Recent excavations of enclosures at New School, Portskewett (Anon 1999; Clarke 1999) and Church Lane, Caldicot (Insole 2000) suggest a sequence of LIA occupation continuing into the Roman period. This matches a similar sequence at Thornwell, where a 'late' Iron Age period is inferred after a hiatus in the 'middle' Iron Age (Hughes 1996). Further afield, the enclosure at Whitton in south Glamorgan has been suggested as beginning no earlier than the early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Jarrett and Wrathmell 1981, 84), whilst the unenclosed sites at Caldicot Quarry, Biglis and Llandough are all argued as emerging only in the latest Iron Age (Robinson 1988). The sequence on many sites in south Wales suggests occupation emerging in the latest Iron Age and continuing into the Roman period. Elsewhere, similar enclosures at Tregare to the north (Anon 1989) and just outside the study area at Bryngwyn (Leslie 1962; Anon 1989) also appear to date from the LIA into the Roman period.

The absence of earlier phases on such sites may be somewhat illusory, however. The pottery from Thornwell could be argued to date earlier than the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD possibly suggesting continued occupation from the EIA phase. The same may be true of Portskewett which produced a La Tène I brooch, although curation may be a factor. At Church Lane, however, and other sites, there is less evidence of any possible early or MIA phases. The enclosed phase at Church Lane in particular dates from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD and could suggest, as at Caldicot Quarry (Robinson 1988), that their LIA phases were unenclosed and that in some

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<sup>74</sup> see Archaeology in Wales for more recent finds (also Lynch *et al* 2000).

cases the 'enclosures' may be solely Roman. At sites like Caldicot it also seems hard to argue that pre-1<sup>st</sup> century AD structural phases of any substance have been completely missed. It does seem therefore that a range of settlements appear in the latest Iron Age and are occupied continuously into the Roman period (cf. Gwilt *forthcoming*).

In addition, a growing corpus of cropmark enclosures is emerging in south Wales although the majority are from west of the study area in south Glamorgan (Driver 1995; Gwilt *forthcoming*) and the Usk valley (Mein 1990). These include a range of enclosure types, often multivallate, curvilinear (e.g. Mein 1990), which show some similarities with those that survive as earthworks (Fig. 6.1.6.1), supporting the suggestion that such enclosures were the norm, in contrast to the apparent greater prevalence of SRE enclosures to the east (see Ch. 4). It appears from the limited evidence of excavated, cropmark and earthwork enclosures that, as with the Welsh Marches to north (Whimster 1989), there was also a higher proportion of multivallate enclosures in this area than on the Cotswolds. Considering the arguments discussed in Chapter 4 and 5, that multivallation may relate to status or concepts of social exclusion and/or boundedness, this disparity between the region and the east needs further explanation. The density of enclosures, although seemingly lower in this area, is undoubtedly a product of variable visibility, and cropmark assessment in more favourable areas including the Usk Valley and parts of south Glamorgan (Driver 1995, 3) indicates a similar density of later Iron Age and Romano-British enclosures to that noted on the Cotswolds. However, a larger number of later Iron Age settlements appears to have been unenclosed prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, including Caldicot Quarry (Robinson 1988), Thornwell (Hughes 1996) and further afield at Biglis (Robinson 1988), suggesting that unenclosed communities also formed a significant part of the settlement pattern in the later and latest Iron Age.

The region also has a number of larger 'hillforts'. Few have been excavated to modern standards but they seem to have a slightly different sequence from that on the English side of the Severn. From excavations at Llanmelin (Nash Williams 1933) Lydney (Wheeler 1932) and to the north of the study area at Twyn-y-Gaer (Probert 1976), it would appear that these were probably occupied from the 5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Sudbrook has been suggested as starting later in the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (Nash-Williams 1939, 55; Whittle 1992, 49) and, although some of the pottery could be slightly earlier, the association of much of the early-looking material with late brooch forms on the hut floors suggests a late date may be correct.<sup>75</sup> Apart

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<sup>75</sup> The association, for example, of handmade, decorated pottery of mid-late Iron Age appearance (Nash Williams 1939, 61) apparently in the same context as La Tene III and Polden Hill brooches (*ibid*, 75) suggests a late (late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC or even 1<sup>st</sup> century AD) date for the start of the site may well be appropriate (accepting the caveats for potential earlier occupation).

from Sudbrook, which may have been exceptional as a LIA exchange centre (see Ch. 7), how many other large enclosures were contemporary with the predominantly LIA settlements described above? Wheel thrown wares at Llanmelin, Sudbrook and Lydney<sup>76</sup> suggest occupation continued into the latest Iron Age at many larger enclosures and thus they may have been contemporary with many of the smaller enclosures discussed above. Lodge Wood Camp, Caerleon on the opposite side of the Usk also suggests predominantly MIA occupation (and construction) (Howell and Pollard 2000, 81), but investigations were too limited to be certain whether occupation continued into the LIA. Sudbrook excepted, the amount of imported or early wheel thrown wares we might expect on such sites is probably small and as suggested elsewhere 'middle' Iron Age wares may have continued in use relatively late in the region. We should be cautious therefore of suggesting a lack of activity in the LIA on this basis and activity (of some sort) in the LIA may be matched by a number of hillforts in Herefordshire, e.g. Sutton Walls (Kenyon 1953) and Dinedor (Anon 1998), and we should perhaps not over-emphasise the complete abandonment of hillforts in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (*contra* Haselgrove 1997, 60). This is true elsewhere in the south west of England, most notably at Maiden Castle (Sharples 1991a) and Hod Hill (Richmond 1968; Cunliffe 1991).

A number of points emerge from the Welsh material. There appears to be a clear divergence in the form of enclosures in this area, matching that seen further west in Glamorgan. The lack of detailed knowledge of non-hillfort enclosures in the Forest of Dean makes it difficult to say where this trend ends. The similarity of enclosures in Herefordshire to examples in the rest of the lower Severn Valley (Fig. 4.2.1.1b) suggests this area had more in common with landscapes to the east. It has frequently been suggested that this divergence in enclosures size and form marks a social difference between this area and other parts of the Welsh Marches and the Cotswolds (Burgess 1980; Savory 1980; Jackson 1999a), in particular as marking a difference in social organisation with possibly less integration and co-operation of social groups (Jackson 1999a, 213). As suggested above for the Cotswolds and Severn Valley such an interpretation of enclosures may be over-simplistic. The differences are based on comparison between the smaller 'hillforts' of this area with the larger ones in the east (e.g. Jackson 1999a). However, many of those sites discussed above and in Fig 6.1.6.1 are better described, in size and form, as 'enclosures' and should be compared with other non-hillfort enclosures. However, differences in form (if not always size) and in the apparent lack of clustering of enclosures seen in other parts of the region may suggest a disparity. The lack of

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<sup>76</sup> La Tène III brooches, bead rimmed pottery and some with 'Belgic' affinities at Lydney (Wheeler 1932) suggest occupation as late as the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD although there is actually little early Roman pottery when compared with Uley West Hill and no apparent early imports as seen at Frocester just across the Severn.

clustering may be due to limited recognition and needs further testing, but if enclosures did not cluster here, this may support Jackson's (1999a, b) interpretation of more 'isolated' communities in this region, although even then it seems this is more likely to be social/cultural patterning rather than based solely on land productivity (*contra* Jackson 1999a, 208).

The second notable pattern is the chronology of the excavated settlements. It appears that many of the enclosures and unenclosed settlements emerged in the LIA and were occupied into the Roman period, reflecting a situation seen elsewhere in south Wales (e.g. Jarrett and Wrathmell 1981; Davies 1980; Lynch *et al* 2000, 172). This raises two questions: firstly, is there really an absence of (permanent) non-hillfort settlement in the 'middle' Iron Age and, if so, does it suggest some form of nucleation in the MIA? Secondly, why should these settlements emerge around the LIA and not before?

Any argument for nucleation in the MIA would appear to be at odds with evidence from elsewhere and seems unlikely considering the evidence of occupation and activity in the Gwent levels. Although some of this, such as the Goldcliff buildings, may have been occupied seasonally (Bell *et al* 2000), the evidence of seemingly more permanent MIA field systems at Goldcliff Moor (Locock and Walker 1998), further possible rectangular buildings at Greenmoor Arch near Newport [643] and pottery from Magor Pill (Whittle 1989; Allen 1998b) may indicate more permanent utilisation of these areas. The evidence appears to match that from the east of the Severn for an expansion of land use and settlement after what may have been a period of nucleation in the EIA. However, as with the east of the Severn the limited knowledge of EIA activity seems likely to relate to its ephemeral nature rather than its absence. The date of both the later Iron Age enclosed and unenclosed settlements raises further problems and it seems likely that excavation of a wider corpus will push back many sites into the centuries preceding the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. However, this trend does in many ways match a similar sequence in the Mendips and Somerset area (discussed below) and the possibility of a shift in settlement around the LIA with the emergence of settlements in virgin locations cannot be dismissed. Considering arguments about the sense of place of enclosures and communities as situated at focal locales in the landscape, argued for the east of the region (above) and elsewhere in the Welsh Marches (Wigley *forthcoming b*), the appearance of new settlements, if not necessarily new communities, needs explanation. Does it indicate communities shifting from elsewhere; perhaps from occupation of the larger 'hillfort' enclosures or are we just seeing more visible phases of more mobile (unenclosed?) communities that become more stable (and later, visible through enclosure) in the LIA/early

Roman period? A combination of the two seems possible but further attention to the date and longevity of non-hillfort settlement is required.

Previous discussions of regional social organisation have focused on its placement within the influence of the Silures and on its difference from east of the Severn, emphasising a social, cultural and even ethnic<sup>77</sup> distinction between the people of south east Wales and elsewhere (e.g. Savory 1980; Gwilt *forthcoming*). Whilst there are clear differences from the Cotswolds these may be overplayed and there are also substantial differences from elsewhere in south Wales (e.g. Williams 1988). In many ways the settlement patterns and histories, at least in the LIA, have some similarities to those seen on the opposite side of the Severn; in Avon and Somerset. This may imply similar social changes taking place in the two areas. The distinction in later Iron Age pottery forms at Llanmelin and Lydney from the east side of the Severn (Cunliffe 1991) and from sites to the north in Herefordshire (Jackson 2000) also requires explanation and supports the concept of different exchange systems and social interactions in the MIA at least along the western Severn seaboard<sup>78</sup>.

## **6.2. Landscape Development in the Southern Part of Study Area**

For a variety of reasons it is more difficult to discuss in detail the nature of ‘landscapes’ in the south of the study area. Despite the large numbers of field systems evident in the south, there is little detailed dating evidence or information about their relationships with Iron Age settlements. Added to this, the nature of much of the region limits the quantity of cropmark data with which to compare and place in context excavated sites (see Ch. 4). Another factor is the apparent absence of Iron Age settlements, despite significant development, for example in the Bristol area (see Ch. 2). It is unclear whether this reflects a real divergence in settlement location and form or is a product of variable recording. Finally, despite the high quality of material from the region, particularly represented by the Lake Villages, there has been little detailed work on the relationship of these sites to Iron Age settlement on the peripheries of the levels, reflecting perhaps the far more site-based approach to the period in the region<sup>79</sup>.

### **6.2.1.1 Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age (6.1c)**

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<sup>77</sup> Going so far as to describe them as ‘aboriginal’ (Savory 1980, 306).

<sup>78</sup> The pottery assemblages from Portskewett in particular will be interesting in assessing if this is the case as at present the number of assemblages available is tiny. Those from sites like Caldicot Quarry and Church Lane are too late to see the distinction.

<sup>79</sup> Although to the south of the study area this is beginning to be redressed by the Cadbury Environs project (e.g. Tabor and Johnson 2002) and in the south the Shapwick project (Gerrard and Aston 1997 etc).

The majority of evidence for EIA activity and land use comes from a range of hilltop sites, most investigated some time ago and others dated primarily on morphological grounds. The lack of large-scale gravel extraction and lower levels of development have meant the large open settlements seen in the upper Thames and Severn valley have not been detected, although there are hints from recent work that non-hillfort settlement was primarily unenclosed.

The accepted model for hillfort development suggests that the large enclosures are of earliest Iron Age date (Darvill 1987; Cunliffe 1991). Bathampton has been proposed as such a site with an unenclosed phase below the rampart, possibly of LBA date (Wainwright 1967). Other large hillforts of EIA date include Maes Knoll, which has produced EIA pottery (Rahtz and Barton 1963) and a range of finger-impressed wares from Little Solsbury (Solisbury) (Falconer and Adams 1935). Geophysics at Maes Knoll (BNESSMR30136) indicates an apparent palisade inside the enclosed area, which may mark an earlier (LBA?) palisaded phase, suggested as early in hillfort development elsewhere (Cunliffe 1991, 313). There is evidence for early occupation at Worlebury (Cunliffe 1982, 53), although this may be related to the larger cross dyke enclosure, which would fit with the other early sites noted above, rather than the stone-built hillfort which appears to be associated with Glastonbury wares (Dymond 1902). Further east, Bury Wood Camp (Grant-King 1961; 1967) represents another similar triangular shaped large enclosure along the lines of Little Solsbury and has produced similar dating material. At Kings Weston [180] the smaller enclosure is also of EIA date, but the cross dyke which encloses a larger area is undated, but it seems feasible to suggest this represent an earlier phase similar to the other large enclosures.

As with the north there is some evidence of these EIA sites associating themselves with earlier monuments. For example, at Small Down (St. George-Gray 1904) the EIA camp encloses a row of eleven (visible) Bronze Age barrows, which dominate the interior (Fig. 6.2.1.1.). Such a situation may mark the overt process of identifying the hillfort with the barrow builders and perhaps associated claims of land tenure. The enclosing within the larger rampart of the LBA barrow at Kings Weston may mark a similar association. In addition to the large enclosures noted above, some smaller 'defended' enclosures are of this early date, including Budbury, Wilts (Wainwright 1970) and Burlledge (Apsimon 1977) which may equate with the small, well defended enclosures in the north, like Crickley Hill.

The nature of non-hillfort settlement appears to vary although - as in the north - there is a tendency towards unenclosed settlement. The recently excavated small D- shaped enclosure at Field Farm (Leach 2002; Fig. 6.2.1.2) appears to be of EIA date. Although described as an

enclosure, its form and size (just 20m across) suggest it may be better to regard it as part of a wider spread of unenclosed settlement. The limited dating suggests it is earlier than the early-MIA unenclosed roundhouses at Cannard's Grave (Birbeck 2000), to the east and stray EIA sherds from Shepton Mallett (SSMR 24926) may suggest a spread of unenclosed settlement across the area.

Unfortunately most other non-hillfort sites are ill-understood, although those known about appear to be unenclosed. Dibbles Farm, Christon (Morris 1988a), has evidence of both early and later Iron Age pottery and appears to represent an unenclosed spread of storage pits. The ditch at Pagans Hill, containing All Cannings Cross type pottery (Apsimon *et al* 1958), suggests another 'unenclosed' site. The promontory position of the latter, however, suggests its location may imply some form of hilltop enclosure. There is also early-MIA pottery beneath the rampart at Brean Down, possibly indicating an unenclosed settlement prior to the construction of the hillfort around the 5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> century BC (Burrows 1976, 141). At Pickwick Farm, Dundry (just below Maes Knoll), there is the suggestion of another, potentially unenclosed, EIA settlement (Barton 1969). At Eckweek (Young 1989) [137] an apparent boundary ditch yielded evidence of early-MIA occupation (although it does not appear to form a defined enclosure) and may relate to a number of apparently EIA settlements in the Peasdown area [140] indicating that there were spreads of EIA settlement on at least some parts of the Mendips. Finds of EIA pottery from Chew Park (Rahtz and Greenfield 1977) and Camerton (Wedlake 1958) suggest other, probably unenclosed early sites in these areas. The other hints of evidence for EIA or LBA settlement in the north Bristol area (Erskine 1991) imply that the supposed lack of EIA settlement here is more due to its ephemeral nature than a real absence.

Just beyond the study area the 'midden' deposit at Potterne represents an unenclosed settlement<sup>80</sup> from the mid to the LBA/EIA. Lawson (2000), has suggested that such 'middens' are more widespread, with similar deposits at All Cannings Cross, and East Chisenbury, Wiltshire (McOmish 1994). One has recently been proposed in the study area, at Stanton Field (BNESSMR11071)<sup>81</sup>, which has material from the early, middle and LIA, potentially from such a 'midden' (P. Davenport *pers comm*). The close association with the hillfort at Stantonbury, which has produced EIA pottery (BNESSMR1306), makes it a priority to assess the relationship between such unenclosed/midden sites and hilltop enclosures. If such midden sites were more common, then the likelihood of their survival is limited.

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<sup>80</sup> Also described as activity area or meeting place (see Lawson 2000).

<sup>81</sup> A midden deposit of late Bronze Age date (although not on the same scale) has also been suggested at Brean Down (Bell 1990, 72).

Evidence for LBA and EIA enclosures is limited despite the evidence of such sites in close proximity to the study area, at Longbridge-Deverill-Cow Down (Hawkes 1994), close to Cadbury Castle (Tabor and Johnson 2002), and further east on the Marlborough Downs (Gingell 1992) and in Wessex (Cunliffe 2000, 153). As yet nothing so early is attested from the study area. The camp at Kings Weston (Rahtz 1956), however, which is of EIA date, might be best regarded as a hilltop enclosure in terms of its size rather than in the same context as the large enclosures at Bathampton and Maes Knoll (Fig.4.2.1.1). In addition, some of the D-shaped cropmark enclosures noted in eastern Somerset (Chapter 4) which are apparently morphologically similar to Longbridge Deverill, may turn out to be of this date.

Whilst excavated examples of EIA field systems unknown, it seems highly likely that many field systems in the region, including both co-axial systems and lynchets, are LBA (e.g. Brean Down: Bell 1990) or EIA in date on account of their morphological similarities to examples on the Marlborough Downs (Gingell 1992) and in Wessex (Palmer 1984; Cunliffe 2000). The kind of evidence for early or later Iron Age hillforts dominating earlier Bronze Age land divisions is not so apparent in the south of the region. The re-dating of Shire Ditch in the Malverns to the LBA (Bowden 2000; Field 2000) might also lead us to question the relationship between the hillforts at Stantonbury and Maes Knoll with Wansdyke. Usually identified as early Medieval or post-Roman (Tratman 1963a; Burrows 1981, 154; Rahtz 1982), its association with these hillforts (both suggested as early) could indicate, as with the Shire Ditch, that even if of early Medieval date it involved re-working an earlier linear boundary, the size and scope of which could easily be of 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC date (*contra* Burrows 1981, 153).

Few sites in the region show evidence of continuity throughout the Iron Age, a feature consistent with landscapes to the north. There may be exceptions, but at present most are poorly understood. In addition to that already mentioned at Stanton Field, Dibbles Farm and some of the hilltop enclosures (discussed below), another site with possible continuity is Whitegate Farn, Bleadon (Erskine 1999), but again the current evidence is unclear. There is EIA/MIA pottery from the site but the only evidence of LIA activity is based purely on radiocarbon dates from pit burials, themselves apparently associated with early pottery<sup>82</sup>. There is no LIA pottery from the site. Initial observations suggest that the site may be a similar unenclosed settlement to that seen nearby at Dibbles Farm (A. Young *pers comm*).

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<sup>82</sup> And as such are thought to be potentially suspect (A. Young of Avon Archaeology *pers comm*).

Evidence of continued occupation throughout the Iron Age, in whatever form, is much more widely seen to the south and east of the study area in Somerset and Wessex. Major sites like Cadbury Castle have long been seen as having a continued sequence of activity from the Bronze Age to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Cunliffe 1982; Barrett *et al* 2002), although the question of whether such occupation was *continuous*, as with sites in Wessex, remains debatable.

#### ***6.2.1.2 Nature of earlier Iron Age social organization and landscape***

The limited evidence from the south of the study area suggests that settlement patterns were similar to the north, with evidence in the LBA for a range of large hilltop enclosures and some smaller EIA promontory forts. Other EIA settlements comprised generally unenclosed lowland sites and hilltop enclosures. Cunliffe (1982, 55) has claimed that developments between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries in eastern Somerset reflect largely the developments seen in Wessex, with a move to developed hillforts. However, the lack of enclosed EIA settlements, seen as characteristic of the EIA in Wessex (Cunliffe 2000, 169), may mark a significant difference between these areas.

Lawson (2000) suggests that the decline of unenclosed sites such as Potterne, around the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC marks a move away from what was a period of negotiation, over land rights and exchange through communal activity at unenclosed sites in the Bronze Age to one “which more aggressively displayed the need for separation and protection” in the EIA. The evidence in the region does not necessarily support this. Hilltop enclosures began early - Cunliffe’s (1991, 346) dating of the largest enclosures to the earliest phase seeming broadly correct - and in some cases may have developed out of existing unenclosed sites. The nature of these sites, however, does not necessarily imply acts of definition like those seen in the later Iron Age and on sites like Crickley Hill in the north, and the probability is that they had little intense occupation. In addition, it appears that unenclosed sites were prevalent throughout the EIA. Thus it might perhaps be better to regard these large hilltop enclosures as having not entirely dissimilar roles to that suggested for Potterne, as communal meeting places for a generally dispersed and unenclosed wider community.

It is hard to argue what kind of society such a settlement patterning represents. Although the EIA has been regarded as more egalitarian (e.g. Hill 1996), others have seen the development of hillforts at this time (at least in Wessex) as the marking a move to more defined territorial control (Sharples 1991c). The two need not be mutually exclusive or the earlier Iron Age be regarded as necessarily less territorial than the later period (See Ch.5). At present it is difficult to determine relationships between hilltop sites and other settlements and with such imprecise

chronology the question of nucleation, suggested perhaps for the Bredon environs needs to be borne in mind.

## 6.2.2. Later Iron Age 4<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Fig. 6.1d)

### 6.2.2.1 *Development of hilltop enclosures*

Cunliffe (1982, 59; 1991) has suggested that the region experienced the same general move to developed hillforts as Wessex, as some communities came to dominate large territories at the expense of other hillforts. The picture may be more complex, however. It is difficult to see any excavated examples where such direct 'evolution' can be attested, the only site which may fit this model being Cadbury to the south. The dating evidence from hillforts in the southern area, often limited to stray finds (but not morphology), shows a decline in the numbers of sites with occupation from the earlier to later Iron Age, but the numbers are so small that it is difficult to place too much reliance on them (out of 62 hillforts and large enclosures only 25 provide any dating evidence) (Fig. 6.2.2.1).<sup>83</sup> Although the majority show evidence of early occupation, this has more to do perhaps with the types of hillforts that have been examined (mostly the larger hilltop enclosures) and the nature of later 'hillforts'; many are smaller enclosures and some are even hard to define as hillforts. As for the question of continuity, some sites such as Worlebury could just as likely represent reoccupation rather than development by an existing community. The limited evidence for later occupation at Little Solsbury (a sherd of decorated Glastonbury ware; Dowden 1957, fig. 3) could suggest re-occupation, similar to that at Bury Wood Camp, by a smaller enclosure community, rather than intense occupation. Worlebury (Dymond 1902) has also produced a range of Glastonbury wares, with the stone rampart phase potentially of later Iron Age date, and the larger cross dyke enclosure an earlier phase.

Until the kind of detailed investigation undertaken at sites like Danebury and Cadbury is done on other sites it is dangerous to assume the same kind of linear development for them. In particular, the possibility of periods of hiatus before re-occupation and the nature of later Iron Age occupation - perhaps much smaller at some site like Bury Wood or more developed and permanent, as at Cadbury - needs to be considered. At Brean Down, for example, there is the suggestion of unenclosed phases in the EIA between the LBA occupation of the hill and the

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<sup>83</sup> S. Gloucestershire, (north) Somerset, BNES, Bristol, N. Somerset and (west) Wiltshire.

enclosure around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (Burrows 1976, 148), possibly implying a similar move to enclosure on some sites at the beginning of the later Iron Age.

In contrast, Stokeleigh (Haldane 1975) and Blaise Castle (Rahtz and 1958) appear to have been occupied from the later Iron Age on entirely new sites. Other 'hillforts' producing later Iron Age pottery include Brent Knoll, which has yielded a single sherd of undecorated Glastonbury ware, and Dolebury (NSSMR252). In such cases it is difficult to postulate the development of existing 'polities'; the evidence could as easily reflect the abandonment of some sites and occupation of new ones perhaps in a renewed requirement for enclosure, one very different from the kind of enclosing of communities or creation of focal (storage?) centres in the earlier Iron Age.

#### **6.2.2.2 Non-hillfort settlement**

For most of the twenty years since Cunliffe's (1982) statement that little is known of non-hillfort settlement apart from the Lake Villages, study has tended to focus on these potentially exceptional sites. In recent years, however, more sites have been added to those known from cropmarks (Chapter 4; Leech 1978) revealing the diversity of non-hillfort settlement. Excavation at Hallen (Gardiner *et al* 2002) has revealed an 'unenclosed' group of roundhouses of 3<sup>rd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> century BC date indicating occupation in at least some areas of the Avon levels at this time probably on slight islands in the salt marsh (Fig 5.2.3.2.1). Cribbs Causeway (King 1998; Fig .4.2.1.2) is also broadly of this date. In relatively close proximity to Hallen it indicates the diversity of settlement form within small areas in the later Iron Age. In this context, we should also note the discovery in the Shapwick area of a bivallate enclosure and conjoined enclosure somewhat similar to Cribbs Causeway. Unfortunately, little of the associated field system at Cribbs was investigated, but it appears to represent a quite different arrangement from Hallen, perhaps indicating a different subsistence regime, although here too occupation has been suggested as short lived (King 1998). The nature of the site, conjoined small enclosures, might suggest enclosures for animals and both cattle and sheep are represented; this role may be supported by the large number of loom weights recorded. Hallen also appears to have a large proportion of sheep but large numbers of cattle bones and a lack of crop remains suggest a purely pastoral role, possibly seasonally occupied (Gardiner *et al* 2002, 10).

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century BC the Lake Villages at Meare East and West emerged with Glastonbury slightly later in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (see Ch. 3). There is some cropmark data which may suggest that other 'lake villages' remain to be discovered in the Levels (see Ch. 4).

These sites, and Hallen, may represent a move into 'marginal' areas not apparently seen in the EIA, and seemingly matched by the appearance of the rectangular building on the opposite side of the Severn in the Gwent levels around 5<sup>th</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> century BC (Ch. 3; Bell *et al* 2000). The matching evidence of expansion into the levels seen on both sides of the Severn may imply an expansion of settlement in general, utilizing more fully perhaps areas that had previously been used in less visible (and permanent) ways and is supported by evidence of forest clearance in the later 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC (Coles and Coles 1986, 155). This is not to say that these areas had been unused in the past, there is middle Bronze Age settlement evidence from the Gwent levels, in the form of rectangular buildings (Bell *et al* 2000) and earlier material from the Somerset Levels, particularly LBA trackways (Coles and Coles 1986, 132; Brunning 1996)<sup>84</sup>. However, evidence of EIA activity, particularly settlement, is limited, possibly indicating use of these areas was infrequent or seasonal. The emergence of the lake villages, Hallen and the Gwent buildings implies a more intense use of such areas, although even in these cases use (particularly that in the Goldcliff area) may have been seasonal (Gardiner *et al* 2002; Bell *et al* 2000).

Other exploitation of the Severn levels is indicated by the fish trap at Oldbury (Allen and Rippon 1997) radiocarbon dated to 300-60 BC<sup>85</sup>, indicating fishing in these marginal areas in the later Iron Age. This latter find is of particular interest considering the noted lack of fish remains on the majority of Iron Age sites (Dobney and Ervynck *forthcoming*) and the absence of fish at Hallen (Gardiner *et al* 2002, 10). Other sites show limited evidence that fish were being exploited, particularly in the levels at the Lake Villages (Coles and Coles 1986, 153; Coles and Minnit 1995, 195), although it appears unlikely they represented a significant proportion of foodstuffs. They are also present in very small numbers at Cannard's Grave (Birbeck 2000). The Oldbury fish trap on the other hand indicates systematic use of the estuary for fishing. The apparent special attitudes towards fish in the Iron Age (Dobney and Ervynck *forthcoming*) could suggest this was done for specific communities or groups, as has been suggested for some sites in the Fens (Hill 1999) and it is may be pertinent to note that a recent survey of fish remains on Iron Age sites identified the LIA complex at Skeleton Green as one of the few to show widespread remains (Dobney and Ervynck *forthcoming*), perhaps stressing their reservation for special or particular communities, although more regional differences in fish consumption may be apparent<sup>86</sup>. Further work is needed to determine

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<sup>84</sup> For example trackways from Shapwick (dendrochronologically dated to 983 BC: Brunning 1996) and stray metalwork finds (Coles and Coles 1986, 132).

<sup>85</sup> Recalibrated with OxCal 3.1 at 1 sigma.

<sup>86</sup> The presence of fish on sites in Scotland and France suggest attitudes towards fish may have been quite regional. They may also have started to change in the latest Iron Age in communities exploring dietary diversity such as wine drinking etc (particularly the 'oppida').

whether fishing was more widespread in the area but present evidence suggests it was surprisingly rare considering the local environment.

Other unenclosed sites in the Somerset levels include those around Alstone and Huntspill, which appear to be of pre-1<sup>st</sup> century BC date on the evidence of Glastonbury wares, and sites on the Poldens at Westonzoyland (Miles and Miles 1969). To this can be added a possible enclosure at Alstone [151], other settlement in the area [152] and possibly close to Brent Knoll [153] also of later Iron Age date, which appear to be situated on Burtlebed islands. Within the levels the role of the hillfort enclosures at Brent Knoll, in the Somerset levels, and Oldbury [103], in the Severn Levels, has been inadequately discussed.

Even considering the evidence for occupation in both the later and latest Iron Age of islands in the levels, the role of these settlements and the 'hillfort' enclosures needs to be further considered. The enclosure on the prominent and highly visible peak of Brent Knoll, in particular, on an island which can have provided little more than 2 square kilometers of dry land, raises questions concerning its subsistence basis and the role of such hilltop enclosures: did it represent a community (high status?) reliant on communities elsewhere for food (similar to the central place model) or was it a site only sporadically visited, perhaps even a ritual location? A similar argument may be put forward for the 'marsh fort' at Oldbury; situated in the Severn Levels, its restricted access yet closeness to the Severn may indicate a similar role. The later Iron Age enclosure on Brean Down (Burrows 1976), also physically isolated from the mainland, represents another site whose location raises questions over its role and relation to other communities. The levels in general appear to offer a far greater diversity of land use than is always recognised and concentration of study on the Lake Villages has perhaps detracted from the potentially equally significant and unusual sites on other islands both small and large in the levels. The role of the levels as a watery boundary is especially significant, raising questions over the marshes' role as a boundary, isolating these settlements, or, as is seemingly suggested for Glastonbury, as a facilitator in access for exchange.

#### ***6.2.2.3 Shifting settlements***

Although the south has more evidence for sites with apparent continuity between the EIA and MIA (see above), there is still clear evidence for discontinuity on many sites. Around Shepton Mallett the EIA occupation at Field Farm apparently migrates south to the area of Cannard's Grave (Birbeck 2001). Cannard's Grave appears to be relatively early on the basis of a lack of Glastonbury wares, although further north this has been shown not always to be an indication of an early date (Chapter 3). There also appears to be a subsequent shift in the mid-LIA, with

no evidence of LIA occupation. In such instances we appear to have a dynamic settlement record of moving settlements, more like that seen in the upper Thames valley at sites such as Claydon Pike. The evidence from around Shepton Mallet cautions against drawing too many conclusions on the abandonment or occupation of many sites in the area. It is quite possible for instance that the enclosed roundhouses at Hallen represent different phases of occupation, migrating across the landscape. This may be supported by Gardiner's claim (2002, 6) that occupation was probably short lived in the 2nd-1st centuries BC. In such cases, the same community may have shifted periodically in a defined area of the landscape. If this is the case, it raises questions of territorial definitions: did these communities feel less need to define themselves within distinct places in the landscape in contrast with enclosures in the north? If so what does it imply in terms of land tenure and inter-community relations? Hingley (1984a) and Hill (1999) have suggested that the spreading nature of such communities implies a different approach to social space and perhaps greater co-operation between communities. In addition, it could imply that community territories were defined beyond the bounds of settlement through markers in the landscape, natural features or cognitive boundaries. The focus on 'site' investigation and the lack of cropmarks in such areas, however, means that such potential landscapes have yet to be fully understood or reconstructed.

#### *6.2.2.4 Enclosed settlements*

The later Iron Age cannot, however, be characterized wholly by unenclosed settlement and although the evidence is not as good as to the north, what there is suggests greater diversity in settlement form (see Ch. 4). As in the north, there is some evidence for a move away from large hilltop sites to smaller enclosures. At Bury Wood Camp (Wiltshire), the earlier hillfort was succeeded by a smaller curvilinear enclosure (Grant-King 1961). It is difficult to determine the length of any hiatus between these settlements or whether the latter represented part of or the same community. However, the act of placing an enclosure within the bounds of the extant ramparts of this earlier monument is surely significant in representing the need of the later community for a more defined settlement area despite being within a much larger enclosure. Closer examination of the relationship between the two features may shed further light on the extent to which placement of this enclosure represented an attempt to tie in to earlier concepts of ownership or control over the local landscape, either through a mythical association with the hillfort or direct continuity of (part?) of the local community. Such a process may not be very dissimilar from the association of later Iron Age enclosures with earlier land divisions noted in the north of the study area with communities appropriating the power imbued in earlier communities' land tenure.

Curvilinear enclosures of this date are also known at Camerton (Wedlake 1958). Evidence of at least one sherd of Glastonbury ware and of currency bars at Kingsdown (St. George-Gray 1930) may also suggest this irregular enclosure was occupied prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. The undated, bivallate enclosure at Shapwick appears somewhat similar to the enclosure at Frocester and may be of later Iron Age date. At Bathampton Meadows a rectilinear enclosure of later Iron Age date shows development from an unenclosed settlement (Davenport 1994), hinting at the kind of move from unenclosed to enclosed suggested for the north. Complexity may be apparent, however, with the opposite sequence being suggested for the enclosure at Portishead, claimed to consist of an enclosure replaced with unenclosed roundhouses with dating evidence from the LIA to late Roman period (NSSMR438) and at Hinton Blewett (BNSSMR1157) where an EIA enclosure was claimed to be overlain by an “Iron Age B” roundhouse. Generally though, it seems highly likely that many undated cropmark SRE enclosures and probably some of the curvilinear enclosures are of later Iron Age date. The cropmark evidence in parts of the Mendips (Fig. 6.2.2.2; Area J) shows that in certain areas SRE and other forms of enclosures were just as common as on the Cotswolds and in some locations may exhibit the similar clustering noted there and in the Bredon environs. The cropmark data also supports the impression of diversity in enclosure form in the later Iron Age, perhaps more so than to the north where SRE and related enclosures appear to be most common in this period. Unfortunately, until more of the cropmarks and earthworks are dated, real differences in proportions are difficult to quantify (4.3.5).

Alongside this range of settlement must be added the use of caves. Where cave use is evident it appears to be predominantly of later Iron Age date, with South Western decorated (Glastonbury) wares evident for example at Rowberrow, Wookey Hole, Sun Hole and Saye’s Hole (Colcutt *et al* 1987) although others indicate activity in the earlier Iron Age (e.g. Slaughterford: Hewer 1927; Sun Hole: Tratman and Henderson 1927) and range of other periods (Balch 1914; Branigan and Dearne 1991). Although settlement is implied in some cases (Balch 1914; Hewer 1927; Ch. 5), the nature of the material from the majority of these caves, including metalworking evidence (supported by the more recent discoveries at Saye’s Hole), supports the long held assertion of a specialist production and non-(permanent) settlement role (Tratman and Henderson 1927, 97; Cunliffe 1982, 59). The focus of these sites could imply that areas of the landscape, such as the Cheddar Gorge, possessed particular significance to the local community, perhaps because of their impressive landscape features, and as such took on a specialised role for the undertaking of transforming processes such as metalworking. Many of the caves have evidence for human deposition (5.7) further indicating their distinctness from normal modes of occupation, which can also be regarded as reflecting

transformation and links to liminal situations, perhaps even similar to pit burials elsewhere (see Ch. 5.; Cunliffe 1992).

The location of many cave sites close to major hillforts may be important. Both in the Mendips and Wye Valley, caves with Iron Age material are associated closely with hillforts, for example, Little Doward [252] and King Arthur's cave [256], in the Wye valley, and Dolebury [196], Rowberrow [268] and Read's cavern [86], in the Mendips. In view of the potential role of these sites as liminal places, for the deposition of human remains (Ch. 5.7) and for activities such as metalworking (Ch. 7.5), we may envisage specialists from the hillfort communities using these liminal areas outside the community. In addition, such locations may have been used by particular groups to maintain power over a wider community. A number of the cave sites with Iron Age remains also have evidence of use and deposition in the Bronze Age, sometimes in the form of the deposition of human remains or artefacts (R.N.E. Barton *pers comm*; Balch 1914). It seems likely that many of these locations already had an important place in the consciousness of the community and were regarded as special places. Is it possible that at some point in the Iron Age, control or association with such locations was deemed more important or was more overtly expressed with the building of hillforts close by? At present the evidence is too limited to be sure, but anthropological studies have shown the importance of controlling special and liminal locations in maintaining power (e.g. Helms 1988). The use of such liminal locations for production is well attested in the region (See Ch. 7.), and may have imbued the locations, the material, and people who used them, with power.

#### **6.2.2.5 Field Systems (Fig 6.2.2.3)**

The nature of land division in the later Iron Age in this area is hard to define. Few field systems have been investigated, although excavation at Dial Hill, Clevedon (NSSMR6415) confirms that some of them are of Iron Age date. Amongst the complex on Charney Down are related enclosures, some of which have produced Iron Age and Roman pottery but none are securely dated (Grimes 1960). Other co-axial systems are known around Bath, at Tormarton (RCHME 1976) and elsewhere in the Marshfield-Tormarton area (SGSMR3864). Iron Age finds associated with these systems and related enclosures suggest Iron Age dates for their use. At Bathampton Down (Fig. 6.2.2.3) the co-axial system is clearly later than the EIA hillfort, possibly suggesting a later Iron Age date. Others, however - although conceivably related to Iron Age sites - have been shown to be mainly Roman in date (e.g. Butcombe) and highlight the difficulty in dating on morphological grounds. Further south, the field system at Wraxall, first noted by Phillips (1933) is associated with a potentially Iron Age enclosure

(Burrows 1987). Other co-axial systems cover huge areas, as at Ashton Court to the south of the Avon (Phillips 1933), which could be related to the hillfort at Stokeleigh.

A similar relationship between an enclosure and field system can be seen at Pitchers Enclosure (Fig. 4.2.6.1a). The large curvilinear enclosure appears to pre-date the co-axial field system and associated rectilinear enclosure. Although the former had limited investigation in the 1960s, neither features are well dated but it seems likely that the co-axial field system is of later Iron Age date. Perhaps notable in this association is the building of the SRE enclosure beyond the bounds of the existing large enclosure, rather than re-occupying it, unlike the construction at Bury Wood discussed above, suggesting a deliberate move away from the earlier habitation area. The only recorded pit alignment in the south of the study area at Shapwick, probably associated with a dense cluster of settlements (Ch.4), appears to be of LIA date (Creighton 1997), in contrast to those in the Severn and Thames Valley (see above).

The good state of preservation of many of these field systems under pasture suggests that detailed investigation of them would be beneficial. There are other potential fossilized field systems in the area (near Cheddar) which would also benefit from dating. The problems in dating these co-axial systems makes it difficult to determine their relationship to enclosures and other land use. The limited evidence suggests many were probably in use in the later Iron Age.

#### ***6.2.2.6 Nature of Later Iron Age Social Organisation***

Although the evidence from the southern part of the study area is somewhat limited, what there is implies a potentially greater diversity of settlement form in the region. There appears to be a range of unenclosed settlement from the later period, many sites continuing into the latest Iron Age and early Roman period. Defined enclosures, like those seen on the Cotswolds and in the Severn Valley do exist (see Fig. 4.2.1.1b) but do not appear to represent the significant component of settlement patterning seen in the north. The larger number of unenclosed sites from this period in the southern area may suggest a somewhat different attitude to space and relations between the inside and outside of settlement and with other communities. Even those settlements, like Cribbs Causeway, where roundhouses are in enclosed areas, the agglomerated form suggests more similarity with enclosures like those in the East Midlands at Dalton Parlours (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990) and Scrooby Top (Chadwick 1999) suggesting presumably a different approach to social space than implied at other enclosed settlements (see Ch. 5).

In this area definitions such as unenclosed and enclosed become harder to establish. As noted in Chapter 5, the Lake Villages represent 'enclosed' space not only through the existence of a palisade at Glastonbury, but in their landscape setting enforcing restricted access. Equally with such sites, access can have been both restrictive (through a watery boundary) but also inclusive; allowing access from a wide area along the Mendips and Poldens; facilitating their suggested role as an exchange centre (Sharples 1991b), yet making them liminal and discrete from other settlements and territories. Other sites have a similar complex association between boundaries: the restricted access to the 'hillforts' at Oldbury and Brent Knoll discussed earlier, for example, where the processes of travelling to and approaching these sites would have created a range of senses of restrictedness, but also accessibility above and beyond the form of the site itself. In such cases, the landscape context and topography of these sites is as important in establishing the cognitive and social implications of their settlement form. It is harder to establish the implications of dry-land landscapes in this way but the diversity in form of these settlements hints at the need to place them within a wider context of how they were approached and viewed from without and within.

When discussing this range of sites we need to accept that we are not comparing like with like. Whilst it is possible that the unenclosed settlements at Hallen, Butcombe and Chew Park and the enclosures at Kingsdown and Bathampton represent (extended) household communities, sites such as the Lake Villages and larger enclosures represent very different types of community, both in size and form. In such cases the approach to defining themselves would have been very different and bound up with their potentially specialist roles within a wider community context. Those roles aside, the diversity seen in smaller settlements suggests that households in the Mendips especially did not feel the need to define themselves to the extent of enclosures in the upper Severn Valley and Cotswolds. This implies a very different relationship between communities in this area. Further work is needed however to establish the nature of the landscapes around such settlements; it is the interfaces between such communities, presumably in the form of field boundaries, that need establishing: how were these constructed, negotiated and maintained?

As with the north there is consistent evidence for landscape expansion. Although recent studies of the Iron Age have stressed processes of change and increasing visibility rather than expansion from the early to middle Iron Age, it seems clear that at least in the Levels there was direct expansion into these areas whether as a result of better climate or changing social systems. The region also appears to be dominated by apparently specialist settlement, including the Lake Villages (Sharples 1991b; Coles and Minnit 1995; Chapter 7) and the Mendip caves. Undoubtedly this is partly due to the nature of the landscape, preserving wetland settlements

and lending itself to cave use. In recent years similar landscapes elsewhere in the region have been shown to possess similarly 'special' Iron Age remains: in the Gwent levels and the cave sites of the Wye Valley. However, this does not mean that the role of these sites in wider settlement and landscape use can easily be dismissed in purely 'special' terms. Whilst Glastonbury may have operated as an exchange and production community and the cave sites as specialist metalworking and/or ritual areas, the relation between such sites and the wider community has not been significantly addressed. Coles and Minnit (1995), for example, stress the use of uplands by the Glastonbury community but how they 'owned' such land or traded with other communities is not fully explained. How were these marsh communities perceived? Were they regarded as exceptional from wider society or merely as another element of it? The growing evidence of another, not entirely dissimilar site, in the marshes at Hallen, suggests settlement expansion in the later Iron Age and that in some cases communities 'specialised' whilst elsewhere they cannot be regarded as entirely different from other communities. It seems crucial that throughout the region from around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC onward, utilization of 'marginal' areas became more prominent with the location of production and exchange centres discrete from the domestic sphere more notable.

### *6.2.3 Developments in the Late Iron Age and Early Roman period*

As noted earlier, the change from the middle to LIA is often difficult to establish firmly in the absence of plentiful assemblages like those from Wessex. However, as argued in Chapter 3, the introduction of Durotrigan wheel thrown wares and the probable end of Glastonbury wares around the mid-1st century BC may suggest this period had greater significance in the southern area<sup>87</sup>. Such a shift would be more in line with settlement development to the east in Wessex where a decline in hillforts has been argued for, along with appearance of new settlements around this period (Cunliffe 2000, 189).

Sites in this period vary in form including a range of unenclosed and enclosed settlements. The enclosure at Kingsdown (St. George-Gray 1930) shows evidence of occupation from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, continuing with some modification well into the Roman period. Its form; a trapezoidal enclosure, is repeated in a number of cropmark enclosures in the vicinity and may represent a common small enclosed community of this period. The recently detected complex, multivallate (hillfort?) enclosure [493] just a few hundred meters to the south complicates the picture further. The cropmarks suggest multiple phases and a number of circular structures. A recent evaluation trench (Powlesland 1998) produced no definitive dating evidence although

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<sup>87</sup> Although there are occasions where 'Glastonbury' wares are associated with late Iron Age wheel thrown wares (e.g. Stokeleigh; see Ch. 3).

the excavator suggested it may be contemporary with Kingsdown. It is difficult to be sure of this and the limited amount of early material at Kingsdown may imply a shift from the larger enclosure.

At Chew Park [79], Gatcombe [181] and Marshfield [167] there is a common theme of an apparently 'unenclosed' M-LIA settlement developing into an early Roman villa. The continuity seen between the middle to early Roman period cannot be regarded as static however. At Butcombe the MIA roundhouse is overlain by a LIA – early Roman modification of the settlement into sub-enclosures reminiscent of the later Iron Age settlement at Cribbs Causeway. At Chew Park the unenclosed roundhouses are followed quickly in the LIA/early Roman period by a rectilinear building aligned parallel to the earlier fence lines, suggesting these boundaries were still in use at this time. The curvilinear enclosures at Camerton and the evidence for LIA and early Roman presence may also mark 'continuity' in some sense. Elsewhere on the Mendips, at Charterhouse-on-Mendip there is growing evidence of apparent pre-Roman activity. In addition to the enclosure partly excavated by Todd (1993) which he dated to the 1st century BC (on limited evidence), recent fieldwalking (V. Russett *pers comm*) and stray finds from the 1970s [514/515] have produced LIA pottery and Durotrigan wares around the Roman occupied area. To what extent this suggests LIA precursors to the Roman settlement and of what form is uncertain but it lends more evidence of the apparent 'continuity' between LIA and Roman settlement in the region.

The nature of other LIA sites is more enigmatic. At Nettleton (Wedlake 1982) there is evidence of LIA activity prior to the establishment of what has been claimed as an early Roman military camp (although which may in fact be a LIA or Early Roman burial enclosure) which later to develop into a Roman temple. The pottery, associated with a LIA coin, indicates an early 1st century AD date but there is little evidence for earlier activity. Previous interpretations of Nettleton have regard the Iron Age presence as purely domestic (Wedlake 1982), however, other interpretations are possible. The presence of a possible Roman fort at this location could suggest some relation to an existing important elite or ritual centre of LIA date although there is little evidence of a pre-Roman temple similar to that at Uley. At Henley Wood temple (Watts and Leach 1996), there is little to suggest a pre-Roman temple apart from a claimed LIA figurine and some stray LIA coins. As discussed below, identifying LIA sites from coin finds is often problematic. However, such finds, and the presence of Roman temples there in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, suggests these locations may already have had significant social or ritual roles in the latest Iron Age.

It is difficult to establish how many sites possess unrecognised 'middle' Iron Age phases. Chew Park and Butcombe provide the best evidence, although at least some of the other LIA sites are likely to have been occupied earlier than the 1st century BC. The first phase at Marshfield for example, has been dated to the 1st century BC/AD. However, the MIA type pot from high up in the early ditch (Blockley 1985, 282) may indicate earlier occupation. The dating of other sites like Lawrence Weston, Bristol is also not as clear cut as may at first be imagined. A number of pottery fragments could be of pre-1st century BC date (e.g. Boore 1999, fig 16:17) although if so, the nature of any associated activity is unknown. As discussed above, the existence of 'middle' Iron Age forms in amongst assemblages of LIA or early Roman material cannot in itself be taken as evidence of phases prior to the 1st century BC or AD. At Westonzoyland there is a clear distinction between the pre-1st century BC phases and LIA activity, with the Glastonbury material not apparently directly associated with the Durotrigan wares (Miles and Miles 1969), yet their presence on the same site may stress continuity.

Significantly, a number of hilltop enclosures in the region show evidence of continued occupation into the latest Iron Age. Wheel thrown wares are known from Stokeleigh (Haldane 1975), possibly Bury Hill (Davies and Phillips 1926) and south of the study area at West Wood, a multivallate hilltop enclosure, which has Glastonbury wares and LIA wheel thrown material (Gater *et al* 1993). These appear to match the LIA (re?)-occupation at Cadbury (Barrett *et al* 2000), but little detailed work has been done to ascertain the nature of occupation of these sites, whether it was permanent or continuous or whether the nature of activity changed as suggested for LIA hillforts elsewhere in southern Britain (Sharples 1991d; Cunliffe 1994, 74). This appears to contrast somewhat with the north of the study area where most hillfort enclosures appear to have been abandoned by the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Haselgrove 1997; Thomas *forthcoming*), although some may continue later. It also contrasts with the pattern suggested for Wessex, where sites like Danebury were abandoned or the level of occupation declined at this time (Cunliffe 1994; 2000). This continued occupation of hillforts has been suggested as representing different social and economic organisation in areas such as Dorset (Cunliffe 1991, 166). However, we should be cautious in regarding this continued occupation of 'hillforts' as necessarily representing the same phenomenon across the south-west or even within the region. In all cases it is uncertain what the nature of occupation was in the latest Iron Age, although at Stokeleigh at least it appears to have involved activity areas (Haldane 1975, 43, 57), although both here and at Bury Hill it may have been similarly limited occupation to that at Danebury. Equally uncertain is whether the occupation marked continuity from the middle/late Iron Age or whether, as suggested at Cadbury (Barrett *et al* 2000, 322), it represents later re-occupation. The location of these sites may also suggest why

they continued to be occupied in the latest Iron Age. Both Stokeleigh and Bury Hill are located adjacent to navigable rivers; Stokeleigh overlooking the Avon and close to the ford at Nightingale valley (Tratman 1946, 176) and Bury Hill next to the river Frome, which notably has had a number of LIA coins found along its course (see Russell 1980, fig.1). These locations on potential route nodes may imply their roles as exchange centres as suggested for some other large LIA enclosures (Cunliffe 1994).

There are a range of other sites in the region without MIA wares (Fig. 8.2b) Hole Ground (Ashworth and Crampton 1964), Shapwick House (Creighton 1997), Clay Moor (Faxon 1998), for example, all appear to only have evidence of occupation after the mid-1st century BC or later. Although this point of middle-LIA continuity is extremely problematic it may be crucial in assessing the nature of social change in the LIA period. A potentially similar pattern of sites emerging in the LIA and continuing into the Roman period can be suggested across the Severn in south Wales (see above). Sites such as Caldicot, Thornwell and Portskewett appear to have evidence only after the 1st c BC/AD, continuing into the Roman period and there *appears* to be little evidence of pre-1st century BC occupation and may suggest similar landscape change.

Hallen also appears to be abandoned by the late 1st century BC. To what extent this was related to the emergence of other sites, such as Northwick (Gardiner *et al* 2002) which start in the LIA is unclear. It is also strange considering the resurgence of activity in the North Somerset levels, probably as a result of a drier period in the early-mid 1st century AD, attested by the early 1st century AD salterns at Banwell (Rippon 2000) and St. Georges (Simon Cox *pers comm*). It may be significant that the lake villages at Glastonbury and Meare were also abandoned in the mid to late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (see Ch. 3). Although argued as relating entirely to environmental changes in the area, it has been noted that the social and political aspects of this abandonment are poorly understood (Coles and Minnit 1995, 206), which could relate instead to a social shift and change in settlement organisation. If these sites are regarded as having a pivotal role in production and exchange in the region (Sharples 1991b), their decline and the emergence of very different settlements elsewhere implies a change in the nature of social relations between communities. The abandonment of these settlements (and apparent decline in activity prior to this; Coles and Minnit 1995, 200) would be at odds with their interpretation as facilitators in exchange and interaction between the tribal groups of the Dobunni and Durotriges (Sharples 1991b; Coles and Minnit 1995, 207). It appears instead that they were already declining or were abandoned at the very time any new larger socio-political groups were beginning to emerge. It is too early to say if the converse was true: that such settlements were abandoned as their production and exchange role in a neutral,

liminal location was no longer required following the emergence of larger socio-political groups where production and control was maintained in other locations or by other groups (see Ch. 7).

There appears to be a contrast, therefore, between those sites which continue into the latest Iron Age, those abandoned prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and those that emerge around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. On such piecemeal evidence, the relationship between abandonment, continuity and emergence of these varying sites remains unclear. So how can the apparent shift or hiatus seen on some sites between middle and LIA sites be explained? There are a number of possibilities. Firstly that the gap in the MIA on many of these settlements is misleading and is more related to it being missed or unrecognised in the pottery assemblages, as might be argued for some sites to the north. Morris (Newman and Morris 1991) argues against such a possibility suggesting that MIA sites can be recognised, at least in the Somerset area, on a lack of Durotrigan style pottery; conversely that LIA sites may contain 'middle' Iron Age wares but *must* also contain Durotrigan wares. There are obvious difficulties in this argument, but to argue that on each of the sites mentioned above MIA phases have been entirely missed may be stretching things too far.

The most extensively excavated hillfort close to the region, Cadbury Castle, throws little light on the subject of shift, hiatus and change between the middle and LIA periods. Alcock (1972) and Cunliffe (1982) have claimed a hiatus in occupation around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC before re-occupation in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. This was based on an apparent layer of humus indicating "neglect of the ramparts" for some period around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, along with the "marked change in pottery, houses and storage pits" of the latest phase (Alcock 1972, 162). Recent re-assessment of the site (Barrett *et al* 2000) is not entirely clear on the existence of this hiatus but does suggest that there was a marked decline in occupation around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. If a distinct period of inactivity (or change in the nature of activity) at Cadbury can be identified, it may support the model of a wider disruption or transformation in settlement systems around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.

Another key feature of the region is the lack of an identifiable 'oppidum', similar to Bagendon or Salmonsbury. Past surveys of the region have regarded this as problematic and sites such as Camerton and Ilchester have been put forward as potential candidates (Leech 1982; Cunliffe 1982, 59; Burrows 1987). However, there is no real reason to regard Camerton as similar to sites like Bagendon or Salmonsbury. The excavated evidence seems to imply a later Iron Age enclosed farmstead (Wedlake 1958) and although there is a great deal of LIA metalwork from the area (Jackson 1990), the presence of a Roman military site or temple

could explain this. If we no longer require an oppidum as the pinnacle of a defined settlement hierarchy then the lack of such a site is no longer inexplicable. The evidence from sites such as Stokeleigh, Chew Park, Butcombe, Kingsdown and so forth may imply that communities negotiated the transfer to new life styles, pottery etc and accepted it more readily within the context of existing settlement patterns than may have been the case for the communities at Bagendon and the banjo complexes in the north. Thus it is perhaps important that banjo enclosures are far less common in the region (4.2.5) and far less common than in the Gloucestershire-Oxfordshire Cotswolds or to the south in Dorset. However, the cluster of enclosures at Somerton and Wells alongside the emerging evidence of a density of potentially LIA activity on the Poldens (C. Gerrard *pers comm*), may be significant - particularly with the abandonment of the Lake Villages - and suggest there was some dislocation and emergence of the types of communities in Dorset, Hampshire and the Cotswolds. Significantly, these are situated on the peripheries of the region, influenced more perhaps by developments to the east in Wiltshire and Hampshire. However, it appears that if banjo enclosures do represent LIA communities, practicing a particular subsistence regime on the peripheries of existing later Iron Age settlement patterns, such communities were less prevalent in this area and this may be highly significant in explaining social developments.

What is characteristic of many of these sites is their persistence into the Roman period, many occupied into the late Roman period. This pattern was also noted by Leech (1982, 212) where he suggested two possibilities; that it represents a wide scale pattern of continuity or a higher level of recognition of Iron Age sites beneath Roman sites. To what extent then is it possible to suggest that around the late 1st century BC - mid 1st century AD the settlement pattern of the region has stabilised from the apparent 'shifting' nature evident in preceding centuries? Could it imply that a more formalised and defined relationship between settlement and landscape had occurred which encouraged stability in settlement, although on present evidence it is difficult to argue that concepts of territory and land ownership were necessarily under-developed in the earlier period. Settlements, like those in the Shepton Mallett area, may have shifted periodically within a defined area of landscape – a similar process to that suggested for the enclosure clusters of the Cotswolds and north Avon valley (Chapter 4) and for unenclosed settlements in the Thames valley. In addition, there is a danger in interpreting back from the Roman evidence; whilst Roman landscapes may have in some ways 'fossilised' the later Iron Age settlement pattern this need not reflect a stability of latest Iron Age settlement patterning and also perhaps underplays the complexity and dynamics of Roman settlement and landscape change.

The large number of sites which show continuity between the LIA and early Roman occupation needs to be explained. A number of factors may be influential. Firstly there may be greater recognition of LIA 'sites' through more familiar pottery forms and a greater amount of identifiable metalwork, such as brooches. In addition such sites may become visible by recognition of Iron Age material amongst Roman assemblages found in fieldwalking and this certainly seems to be a factor in the detection of LIA activity around Charterhouse-on-Mendip, the Marshfield sites and at Lawrence Weston. The focus of earlier research excavations on Roman sites has also undoubtedly artificially skewed the picture. It is only subsequently that Iron Age phases have been recognised, for example, at Gatcombe villa (Branigan 1977), Butcombe (Fowler 1968), Hole Ground (Ashworth and Crampton 1964), Green Ore (Ashworth 1962) and south of the study area at Littleton villa (Gater *et al* 1993). It is possible, therefore, that more sites with evidence of discontinuity from the LIA to the early Roman period remain undetected (cf. Leech 1982).

However, a significant number of sites in the southern area appear to have adopted Romanised ways of living relatively quickly and continued to exist in the early Roman period. This overall pattern of continuity appears to contrast with the image of unrest and resistance to Roman occupation argued from the 'massacre deposit' at Cadbury Castle (Alcock 1972; Barrett *et al* 2002) and from the literary sources which have been claimed to suggest a compliant northern Dobunni and a resistant south (Hawkes 1961, 58; Sauer 2000, 41). In contrast, this evidence may suggest there is less evidence of dislocation in the LIA/early Roman period. There are complex issues here, not least how we define 'continuity' and how resistance or the adoption of new (Roman?) ways of life are recognised; in short the controversial process of 'Romanization'.

It is perhaps notable that in many cases it was those sites which are relatively poor or might be deemed 'unremarkable' in the later Iron Age that continued to be occupied into the Roman period. This can be contrasted against the slightly different nature of Romanization at some of the apparently 'richer' villas in the Cotswolds, for example, Ditches, Bagendon and Whittington, which appear to have an early flourish but are abandoned after the early Roman period. A somewhat similar situation has been argued for the upper Thames valley (Hingley 1984a, 83), where the settlement pattern and social organisation has been regarded as more inherently stable than that in the Cotswolds. In many discussions of the later Iron Age amounts of Romanised pottery have been suggested to indicate levels of Romanization, but it is important to remember that the adoption of pottery does not necessarily mean complete adoption of Roman ways of life and rule.

The other differences in settlement patterns between north and south may also be crucial in explaining the apparent discrepancies. The kind of clustering noted in the upper Severn and Cotswolds is not so evident to the south, whilst there was a greater morphological diversity in settlement form, with a larger number of unenclosed settlements (see Chapter 4). A number of reasons can be postulated, including a greater openness to outside influences in this area with less resistance to the Romanised wares. Certainly a larger number of sites adopted Romanization relatively early and perhaps, more importantly, there appears to be little evidence of dislocation between the pre-Roman and Roman phases of settlement.

#### ***6.2.4. Conclusions: Static or dislocating?***

The picture of settlement and landscape change in the south of the region can be interpreted in a range of ways. Despite the sense of 'continuity' that many sites exhibit it can be suggested that rather than representing a static and evolutionary landscape, the Avon, Mendips and Somerset levels experienced radical and dynamic periods of settlement change. There is potential but limited evidence from sites such as Cannard's Grave that this was part of the fabric of communities, with the community gradually 'migrating' southwards from the EIA settlement at Field Farm to Cannard's Grave. Perhaps rather like the upper Thames Valley communities had some imperative to move within a tract of landscape.

By about the 1st century BC/AD, communities appeared to stabilised their location in the landscape. It may perhaps be more accurate to say that this was a gradual process over the later Iron Age. It also should be remembered that Romanization of these settlements in some ways 'fossilised' the settlement patterning with no longer the same shifting seen in the Iron Age.

It seems clear that as with the northern area EIA settlement suffers from a lack of visibility and it is interesting that early non-hillfort settlements are only really emerging with the advent of intensive rescue related fieldwork. Even here, it should be noted that the EIA settlement at Field Farm, Shepton Mallet, was only noted because it was an enclosure and showed up on geophysics. How many more ephemeral unenclosed settlements, like that at Shorcote, which are unlikely to be revealed on coarse resolution geophysics, are being missed?

### **6.3. Coin and metalwork deposition in the Severn-Cotswolds**

Commonly, when discussing landscapes, analysis concentrates on the 'hard' elements of that landscape: the settlement evidence, the field systems, trackways and in some instances their

relation to 'natural' features. Rarely is material culture regarded as important in interpreting how the landscape and space was used, visualized or appropriated by communities. However, it has been suggested that deposition within the landscape and specifically 'off-site', away from the domestic sphere, may have been important in conveying meaning both within and between communities. This has been argued for artefacts such as quern stones (A. Chadwick *pers comm*; D. Heslop *pers comm*) and also for metalwork (Fitzpatrick 1984). This section focuses on discussing the archaeological significance of coin deposition, with a brief discussion of some other classes of metalwork. Rather than a detailed analysis of date or typologies, it seeks to determine how differences in deposition and distribution reflect socio-cultural differences and their implications for the nature of social organisation in the LIA.

### 6.3.1 Coinage

#### 6.3.1.1 Methodological problems:

A database<sup>88</sup> was produced which constitutes a listing of Dobunnic coins prior to 1994; all those on the Celtic Coin Index after 1994 and all non-Dobunnic coins are not included, of which a more detailed study is being undertaken (Haselgrove and Moore *forthcoming*). Even without the most recent finds, the exact totals from certain sites are often in doubt. For example, De Jersey (1994) lists 5 coins from Kingscote, Reece (in Timby 1998, 401) lists 6 and 17 more are claimed to have been found by recent metal detecting but not recorded (Timby 1998, 287). The same has been claimed of Camerton where more coins have been claimed but not recorded (Van Arsdell 1994). More coins are similarly recorded from Somerford Keynes (King unpublished) along with a large number of exceptionally early Roman coins.

#### 6.3.1.2 Chronology

Early finds from the region include two potin coins from The Park and Shipton Oliffe, Gloucestershire, dated conventionally to the late 2<sup>nd</sup> or early 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Hobbs 1996, 17). The Park potin is useful in being in a pit with a C14 date of 380-200 BC (1 sigma)<sup>89</sup>. The nature of these sites, neither appearing to be of high status, indicates the use of coins on such sites in the region relatively early. Another potin is known from Glastonbury.

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<sup>88</sup> Not included for reasons of space

<sup>89</sup> They seem to be from same context but Marshall's (1991) report is not entirely clear.

Dating of the Dobunnic (Western) coins has been the subject of much debate. Van Arsdell's (1989) detailed chronology is almost certainly too specific and has received substantial criticism (Haselgrove 1993, 57; Creighton 2000; Boon in Price 2000). The end date for coinage proposed by Van Arsdell as correlating with AD45, the invasion, in particular seems far too neat. Some series could well have been produced after this time, as in Iceni territory (Haselgrove 1987a; Van Arsdell 1989), and they certainly continued to be deposited well into the Roman period. The other problem is that a number of the coinages may have been contemporary. Seeing them in sequence is based on a circular argument of regarding the region as a unified tribal entity with single coin issuers (Van Arsdell 1989; 1994) whereas studies suggest it may have been more complex (Selwood 1984; Haselgrove 1993). Allen's (1961; Selwood 1984) suggestion of a division between a north and south is no longer supported by the distributions (Van Arsdell 1994) but complexity in the distribution of particular types and source of these coins remains.

The Nunney hoard provides the largest amount of Dobunnic coins from one location but cannot have been deposited before around AD50 on basis of the Claudian coins, suggesting that many of the types in the hoard need not be earlier than 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and the high numbers of Es and Fs may indicate a late date for these types. Elsewhere, coins from pre-Roman contexts are difficult to identify (see below). A Colchester brooch in the main rubble fill of the inner enclosure ditch at Ditches below the fill containing the EISV coins may suggest they were all deposited in the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD or later.

If we retain Van Arsdell's general chronology can we determine broad differences in site chronology? Haselgrove (1993, 59) has suggested that the emphasis on Dobunni I-J suggests a late presence at Kingsholm and deposition by Roman soldiers. If Dobunni A are earlier (Van Arsdell 1989)<sup>90</sup> then it is potentially significant that there are two Dobunni A coins from Ditches yet none from Bagendon (Fig. 6.3.1.2a) possibly supporting the suggestion (Trow 1990) that the complex developed from Ditches.

### *6.3.1.3 Archaeological context of coin finds*

The small number of finds from recorded contexts shows the difficulty in dating the coins by association or developing any real understanding of the deposition practices associated with LIA coins. The finds from the sacred spring at Bath provide further problems. Sellwood (1988, 279) states that although all the coins may have been issued prior to the Claudian

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<sup>90</sup> Although it has been suggested (Haselgrove 1993, 59) that they may not be 'Dobunnic' at all as there distribution is more widely seen beyond the region.

conquest the large number of Roman coins in the mixed deposit make it possible they were deposited later. Van Arsdell's claim (1994, 25) that the coin from Barrow II at Camerton represents a definite pre-Roman context for a Dobunnic coin is difficult to substantiate. This coin comes from the top fill of the silted-up Bronze Age barrow ditch which contains early Roman pottery (Wedlake 1958, 31). Thus Haselgrove's (1987, 233) assertion that no Dobunnic coin comes from a certain pre-Roman conquest context remains true. Even those at Ditches, in the upper backfills of the ditches, could conceivably have been deposited around the conquest period or later.

*Table. 6.3.1.3. Dobunnic Coins from possible pre-Roman contexts*

<b>Type</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Refs</b>
Dobunni H EISV	Butcombe	Poss. from a pit associated with LIA pottery but details are few.	Unpublished – Peter Fowler <i>pers comm</i>
uncertain	Camerton	Silted upper fill of Barrow II – associated with early Roman material	Wedlake 1958
Dobunnic G Anted	Ditches	upper fill of Track ditch A	Trow 1988
Dobunnic H EISV	Ditches	upper back fill of inner enclosure Ditch assoc with Colchester brooch	Trow 1988
Dobunnic H EISV	Ditches	upper back fill of inner enclosure Ditch	Trow 1988
Dobunni E	Nettleton	In upper fill of ditch associated with LIA pottery	Wedlake 1981
Dobunni B	Frocester	In upper fill of pit poss. LIA	Price 2000
Various (see list)	Bath	Sacred spring with RB material	Sellwood 1988
Not recorded	Lechlade, Sherbourne House	From top fill (slump?) of MIA? Pit alignment	Unpublished; Bateman 1999b
Dobunni I and J	Bagendon (1980) (contexts of 1961 material not clear)	Pit associated with samian of mid 1 <sup>st</sup> century AD date	Unpublished; Sellwood 1984, 203

#### **6.3.1.4 Location of coin finds**

The location of coin finds is somewhat more revealing. A danger in Van Arsdell's (1994) trend analysis (Fig. 6.3.1.1) is that it does not look in enough detail at the nature of the 'sites' yielding coins and suggests that coin use exists on all LIA settlements. Sellwood (1984) and Haselgrove (1987; 1993) have stressed that the majority of Dobunnic coins come from Roman contexts. In the study area, the majority of coins are stray finds (Fig 6.3.1.3) (although

what the term 'stray' actually involves is debateable – see below), with large numbers from the so-called oppida at Bagendon and Weston-under-Penyard.

Otherwise the majority of coins derive from settlements which are probably Roman but some of which may have LIA activity on them. In many cases a circular argument operates where by LIA phases are ascribed on the basis of LIA coin finds. Many coins come from sites where LIA phases are hard to identify, including Kingsholm Roman fort and vicus (19 coins), Kingscote (6 +17 unid.) and Cirencester (6). Weston-under-Penyard may also be misleading and all the coins may be entirely from Roman levels (Haselgrove 1993, 57; King 2000). Most striking is the large number from Roman temple sites, including Bath, Henley Wood (Watts and Leach 1996), Uley-West Hill (Woodward and Leach 1992), Sapperton, which probably derive from the suggested temple at Hailey Wood (Moore 2001), and Nettleton, where an unusually large number of brooches from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD 'fort' enclosure (Wedlake 1982, 118) may suggest this was an early temple. A link between coin deposition and Roman temples can also be suggested at Wycomb/Syreford and Somerford Keynes where the unusual assemblage has been suggested as a possible votive focus near a crossing of the Thames (King *unpub*). One also wonders whether the rich and unusual metalwork collection at Camerton (Jackson 1990), and the location of the town around two prominent Bronze Age barrows, may represent a temple complex. LIA coins were clearly deposited in large numbers on Roman temples, as noted elsewhere (Haselgrove 1987; 1989), but may also suggest pre-Roman sacred sites as precursors of which there is evidence at Uley-West Hill and Syreford-Wycomb. Roman deposition may have carried on earlier practices which in many cases, for example, at Bath or Henley Wood, may not have been associated with any standing structures. It raises the further question whether many of the stray finds, or coin finds at other supposed 'settlement' sites, such as Bagendon or Weston-under-Penyard, are also offerings in sacred spots but which either also had other roles or did not become Roman temples. Potentially, however, much of this deposition may represent 'Roman' processes of deposition or at least a change in deposition practices in the latter half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Haselgrove 1993, 59). If this is the case, how much will it inform us of the nature of LIA socio-political organisation or deposition practices?

The high number of 'stray' finds may also be somewhat misleading. Coin studies have regularly tended to view the majority of coins as deposited in off-site contexts, with a focus on a handful of sites like Bagendon and Camerton (Van Arsdell 1994), regarded as tribal centres. However, closer study of the corpus from the region indicates that concentrations in the vicinity of, for example, Cleeve Prior (10 coins) and Bredon Hill may indicate other significant LIA or early Roman sites. Closer examination of the cropmarks and other finds of

these locations suggest that they are far from being stray finds. Cleeve Prior, and the nearby site at South Littleton [453] (WSMR07334) has produced middle-LIA and early Roman pottery and brooches and nearby a currency bar hoard (Cox 1979). Further examples of unusual coin concentrations which suggest important LIA/early Romans sites also occur at Stoulton, Worcestershire [454] which includes Corieltauavian, Atrebatian, early Roman pottery and brooches as well as unidentified Dobunnian coins<sup>91</sup>, and another example from Worcestershire may be the silver coin from SO93694074, from an area with a double ditched enclosure (cf. Fig. 6.1.1.1). In Gloucestershire, Quenington has cropmarks of potentially Iron Age and Roman enclosures (1/143; RCHME 1976) as does Frampton Mansell which yielded an Armorican coin (1/52; RCHME 1976)<sup>92</sup>. Many more sites are being assessed (Haselgrove and Moore *forthcoming*) with an increasing trend that findspots are invariably associated with potential evidence of other LIA and Roman activity. It seems increasingly likely that many of the finds attributed as stray losses actually derive from LIA or Roman sites, in particular sanctuaries or temples, and have important bearing on discussion of why and where coins were deposited.

Of the other stray finds many may represent deliberate 'off-site' deposition. Excavation at the site of the Winchester hoard (J.D. Hill *pers comm*) and examination of torc finds in East Anglia (Hutcheson 2003) has indicated that metalwork finds were often located in particular areas of landscape that may have been symbolically significant. These may have often been boundary contexts between different kinds of landscape (upland/lowland, light/heavy soils) or socio-political boundaries. The location of the Nunney hoard on the southerly limit of the Western coinage may indicate it was significant as a cultural boundary. Others may have been associated with deposition in wet locations and many are associated with rivers, for example from the Thames at Kempsford and a number from the (south) Avon river similar to some of the potentially ritual deposition at sites like Bath.

### 6.3.1.5 Tribes and trade

The role of non-Western (Dobunnian) coins in the region is problematic. Haselgrove (1993, 57) has stressed that Durotrigan coins on 'major' sites in the region "were probably brought by the Roman army", although why this should be the case is unclear. There seems no reason to suggest that Durotrigan coins from sites such as Birdlip are the result of independent contact, particularly in such cases potentially up the Severn. However, it stresses the extent that the distribution of 'Iron Age' coinage may have been used by and reflect Roman military

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<sup>91</sup> Not included on the listing as no further details (see Haselgrove and Moore *forthcoming* for details)

<sup>92</sup> and potentially at least one of the 'Sapperton' Dobunnian coins may come from here.

movement (Reece 1988, 44) and ritual deposition in the early Roman period (see above). If we consider LIA coin as essentially a trade token (Van Arsdell 1989), and the role of LIA oppida as trade emporia, then we should also surely expect more non-western coins on sites such as Bagendon. Only a single Durotrigan and one Trinovantian coin were found in Clifford's excavation (Allen 1961) with a single Tasciovanus coin from Ditches (Trow 1988). If its role was trade with the intense coin producing areas to the east this surely is odd. It is also at odds with other sites, particularly Bath and Weston-under-Penyard (Fig. 6.3.1.3b) which have more diverse coin imports, including Corieltavi, Atrebat, Trinovantian, Durotrigan and Gallic coins at Weston-under-Penyard and Durotrigan, Armorican and a Cunobelin coin from Bath. Although Weston may be regarded as an oppidum its location on the interface with a non-coin producing area makes this even more odd and may suggest that coinage's main role was not for market exchange. The focus on assemblages at sites like Camerton and regarding them as 'oppida' (Van Arsdell 1994) disregards other significant assemblages of coins from sites like Cleeve Prior, Stoulton, Bath, Easton Grey and Kingscote, many of which have been ignored. This focus on certain sites has been the result of an oppidum-central place model which requires one significant focus of trade, exchange and elite residence. The recognition of other significant assemblages, often associated with other LIA/ER finds, suggests such a model is flawed and we have a more complex array of sites using and depositing coins. In many cases these may be early Roman temple complexes rather than LIA elite residences.

The varied distribution of the different types of Dobunnic (Western) coins (Fig. 6.3.1.1), suggests that there was not a centralised issuing authority. Instead more fluid issuing practices may have taken place by elites maintaining allegiances at certain times. The deposition of coins (and that of other metalwork perhaps) may relate to boundary locations. It is surely significant that the high deposition sites (Bagendon, Camerton, Weston-under-Penyard, Bath) area actually relatively peripheral to what has been regarded as the main focus of Dobunnic coin deposition. Does this mark a focus on depositing coins on the interface between socio-cultural zones (discussed in Chapter 7 and 8)? However, there is little to support the argument of a correlation in socio-political unit between the Glastonbury wares and Malvern wares and Dobunnic coins (Sellwood 1984; Cunliffe 1991). The distribution of Glastonbury wares (Fig. 7.3.3) extends well south of the main focus of Dobunnic coins, whilst Malvern wares also have a somewhat different distribution. It seems likely these items operated on different exchange mechanisms and have little relation to each other. Van Arsdell (1994, 27) has suggested a direct association with the 'Jurassic way'. The existence of the Jurassic way has been convincingly critiqued (Sherratt 1996) and association of the coins with the major rivers

is more arguable. This may be for a number of reasons as well as 'trade'; relating to major LIA/early Roman settlement and the ritual depositions mentioned above.

### 6.3.2. 'Off site' metalwork deposition (Fig. 6.3.2.1)

Examination of 'off-site' metalwork deposition, i.e. from non-settlement contexts, is difficult in the region yet may be further enhanced by the Portable Antiquities scheme, of which only a few finds can be included here<sup>93</sup>. A particular problem is the lack of detailed findspots and lack of information about the archaeological context - which has been shown for coins to give far greater understanding of their locations than mere stray finds. As suggested for coin finds, both stray and hoard, 'stray' metalwork finds are increasingly being seen as relating to undetected settlements or other (man-made) landscape features.

From the initial findings (and with the cautionary note on the uncertainty of the true number of finds/distribution from the region) the most distinct pattern is the southerly distribution of torcs, particularly in gold. Only two torcs are known from the northern part of the study area, one iron example excavated at Frocester (Price 2000) and a copper alloy example recently found beyond the study area at Droitwich (WMIDFL3118). This distribution may relate to the watery contexts in which they were recovered, predominantly in the levels area, but this surely cannot be the sole explanation for this pattern. The date of these finds (all late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC/1<sup>st</sup> century AD) may be significant when compared to the Dobunnic coin distribution. If we suggest that coin deposition was related to watery (and boundary) contexts (see above), then why are more Dobunnic (and Durotrigan) coins not found in this area (Sellwood 1984; Sharples 1991c) when torcs have been found? This is particularly true of places like Clevedon where there is evidence for (high status?) LIA activity in the form of metalwork and burials (Ch. 5). It has been suggested that metalwork deposition in rivers in certain areas of the country represents different way of expressing or negotiating power (Fitzpatrick 1984; Hill 1995b; Hutcheson 2003). Such a difference, therefore, may reflect different depositary practices and the negotiation of power (and/or communication with the gods) through other items rather than coins in this area. This would fit with the other apparent 'cultural' differences in the region and perhaps further suggest a deliberate rejection of the social traditions taking place elsewhere. The same might also be suggested for south Wales where only few Dobunnic coins have been found yet there appears to be a relative density of elaborate metalwork, including the bulls heads from Lydney (Wheeler 1932) and

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<sup>93</sup> A more detailed examination is being conducted (Haselgrove and Moore *forthcoming*). Angie Bolton (Finds Liaison West Midlands) provided details on finds from Worcestershire and noted the many recovery and recording problems of metalwork finds across the region.

the bull mount and strap union from Chepstow (cf. Gwilt *forthcoming*) potentially suggesting difference in use or deposition practices between these areas. Other finds such as the Iberian Aust figurine (British Museum 1925) and the Etruscan figurine from Swell (Rigby *et al*1995) have been questioned and may not originate from the region at all (these are discussed in more detail in Ch. 7).

### **6.3.3 Conclusions**

There is some limited suggestion that the deposition of metalwork items such as torcs was more prevalent in the southern area where coin deposition was less marked, perhaps suggesting different cultural attitudes towards the deposition of metalwork and reinforcing the idea of different social zones. Further work is needed, however, before such a relationship can be established.

Closer inspection of the archaeological context of coin finds in the region suggests a large proportion derive from unexcavated sites - many of which are LIA/early Roman sites and/or Roman temples - suggesting that the coins had a significant ritual role and were not ethnic markers. The complexity in coin deposition and distribution appears to argue against a unified tribal authority and much coin deposition in the region appears to be early Roman in date. Although coins may have had a ritual/symbolic role, elsewhere they may have represented gifts of allegiance between communities or individuals. The variation of coinage, rather than a simple chronological sequence, may indicate different contemporary issuers competing for power in the latest Iron Age through gifts, alliances and exchanges with other groups.

## Chapter 7

### Production, exchange, use and deposition: a social perspective on material culture in the Severn-Cotswolds

#### 7.1. Introduction: re-engaging culture, settlement and exchange

Too often the use, production and exchange of material culture has been divorced from the settlement and landscape elements of Iron Age society. When discussed in relation to regional landscape studies it has been explained purely in terms of quasi-economics with little discussion of the social implications for such exchanges and their relation to broader changes in society. The evidence from the Severn-Cotswolds, and western Britain in general, indicate the extent that all these elements were involved in the construction and reinforcing of social identities and integral to the nature of communities in the region. A number of materials were produced and exchanged in the region, including pottery and briquetage, which have been the focus of previous study (e.g. Peacock 1968; 1969; Morris 1983; 1985; 1994; Roe 1995; Ehrenreich 1994), but the full potential of the region for examining the processes of exchange has never been fully explored. In particular, there has been a failure to integrate the varying material cultures into broader concepts of how Iron Age societies in the region worked<sup>94</sup>. Most distributions and exchange systems have been interpreted in quasi-economic or functionalist terms (e.g. Morris 1994; Roe 1995), with little detailed examination of their social implications. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the production and exchange of material culture and to combine these to formulate hypotheses about the mechanisms of exchange and what these indicate about social structures and relations between communities on a local, regional and wider scale.

As Morris (1994, 387) has stated, there is a need to integrate the exchange of all types of material, including pottery, quern stone, briquetage, metalwork and textiles into a wider understanding of the process of production and exchange. Alongside these can be incorporated the exchange of agricultural goods, people and labour and in so doing develop

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<sup>94</sup> Although see Morris (1996).

both an understanding of exchange systems and how communities related and interacted with each other, identifying the potential nature and existence of wider communities and social identities.

A failing of past approaches has been to ignore the social aspect of exchange. The quasi-economic approach ignores the role of exchange and distribution in social interaction and relationships between communities. Many studies of prehistoric exchange have noted that the processes of exchange are part of, and driven by, social as well as economic forces (Hodder 1982; Cumberpatch 1995; Le Blanc 2000; Saitta 2000; Woodward and Hill 2002). Despite the wealth of evidence in the region the nature and implications of these social forces has been widely neglected. This neglect of the social relationships indicated by exchange networks and artefact distributions is at odds with the way in which changes in exchange systems have been regarded as reflecting and instigating social change in the later Iron Age of southern Britain (e.g. Haselgrove 1987b; Cunliffe 1988; Sharples 1991b). It is only by understanding fully the mechanisms of exchange on a social level, therefore - and whether similar or different exchange systems and social processes existed for the production and distribution of different artefacts - can the effect of changes in exchange be explored.

Greater discussion of the location, meaning and social groups involved in the production of these artefacts is required. Although a number of studies have been able to identify production areas (e.g. Peacock 1968; 1969; Morris 1983; 1985; Ehrenreich 1994; Roe 1995), there has been little examination of why specific production sites were chosen and grew in importance over the Iron Age. The social implications of how production was controlled in such locations, if at all; the nature and type of groups engaged in production; and whether such groups represented resident specialists or seasonal use of these areas by a wider group of communities, is rarely discussed. Closer consideration is also needed of the nature of the locations in which production was taking place and their potential significance for the community at large.

To progress from a quasi-economic reading of exchange this study combines the various aspects of an artefacts 'life'; its production, exchange, use and final deposition to create what have been termed 'biographies' of such artefacts. Through examination of all aspects of the artefacts' lives more may emerge about their role within communities and explain other aspects such as production locations and exchange patterns. Each aspect may impinge upon the others - with the production, use, exchange and deposition all reflecting in different ways the role and importance of these objects within the communities engaged in their exchange. For example, the nature and structuration of deposition of these artefacts, in form and location

in the landscape or on site, may indicate the status of artefacts within the community at large (cf. Hill 1995; Chapman 2000; Hingley forthcoming) and explain why exchange took place and what implications engaging in the exchange of different artefacts had for broader social relations in the region.

## 7.2 Salt production and exchange of briquetage (Appendix 6)

Salt production and exchange has been well discussed in the region, with a particular focus on Droitwich and Cheshire briquetage (Morris 1985; 1994). Morris' study of Droitwich material indicated its wide distribution network. Fig 7.2.1 shows the distribution of Droitwich and Cheshire briquetage in and beyond the study area. To Morris' distribution pattern can be added a number of new find spots including a recent find from as far south as Eckweek [137]. The number of sites in the north of the study area with both Droitwich and Cheshire briquetage, predominantly situated to the west of the Malverns, is also notable.

The production of salt in the Somerset Levels has been less well studied, although there is growing evidence that it took place in the LIA at least. A saltern at Banwell in the North Somerset levels provides firm evidence of salt making in the area in the LIA; probably the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC/AD (Rippon 2000, 178). The evidence from Banwell appears to be supported by recent finds from St. George's, Weston-super-Mare [233]. Preliminary observations suggest that these represent a large complex of salterns with initial dating suggesting a latest Iron Age date (probably 1<sup>st</sup> century AD), roughly contemporary with those at Banwell (S. Cox *pers comm*). On such evidence it seems plausible that a number of other previously recorded salterns, mostly regarded as Roman in date, may have come into use in the LIA, for example those at Badgeworth [155]. The only evidence of earlier salt making comes from East Huntspill, where a radiocarbon date apparently associated with briquetage gave a date of 490-100BC<sup>95</sup>. This might suggest MIA salt exploitation but as yet the evidence is too limited.

The impression from Banwell and St. George's is that salt making was different to that seen in Droitwich and Cheshire. The brine springs at the former provided a continued, uninterrupted source of salt production that remained in use from at least the LBA to the medieval period (Woodwiss 1992). In contrast, the Levels, whilst providing the opportunity for salt making, were less reliable with no fixed or permanent production sites. If the evidence from Banwell reflects wider salt making processes in the region, then the Levels may have had a more haphazard, potentially seasonal role. This may reflect other uses of the salt marsh in the LIA.

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<sup>95</sup> 400-190 BC(68%); 800-100BC (95%) (*Radiocarbon* 34).

Rippon suggests that by the LIA the salterns were situated in “weedy grassland which may have been used for seasonal grazing... salt reached the saltern through salt water creeks which rarely suffered over bank flooding so wider landscape would not have been regularly inundated” (Rippon 2000, 99). It seems likely that LIA salt making in the levels was related to other seasonal activities, such as grazing and reed cutting, in the drier summer months, which were also ideal for salt production (cf. DeRoche 1997, 22). Because of this localized, possibly sporadic, production they are unlikely to have produced the kind of distinct identifiable briquetage fabrics seen at Droitwich with, presumably, the use of varying local clays. In addition, Simon Cox has noted that few moulds for export are visible at the St George’s site, suggesting that this salt, unlike that from Droitwich and Cheshire, was not exported long distance.

The presence of Droitwich briquetage at the apparently early-MIA site at Eckweek (Young 1989; *pers comm*) can be explained in a number of ways. Firstly, that in the early-MIA, marine transgression in the north Somerset Levels restricted the potential for salt making, which if it took place at all was on a small, localised scale. This appears to be supported by the evidence from the current known sites that suggest salt production within the Levels was only possible in a period of drying out around the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (although there is evidence of salt making at Brean Down from the LBA (Bell 1990, 170). The second possible explanation is that salt manufacture in the Levels operated on a different scale than the brine springs of Droitwich and Nantwich. Production may have been based on local production and consumption with little potential for long distance exchange. The fact that a site only c. 20 km from the North Somerset Levels resorted to salt imported from Droitwich (c. 105 km away) suggests little interaction in salt exchange networks with the communities on or near the Levels.

This may have a number of important social implications. The permanent sources at Droitwich provide a focus for the source of salt and production, similar to those for regional potteries and quern production in the region (see below). This may have resulted in specialised groups dominating production and exchange in that area. In contrast, the levels production may have been less well defined with the process potentially a seasonal one by the local, salt marsh edge communities. It is possible that inland communities, despite being close to salt making potential, did not access these resources and thus were more open to long-distance exchanged briquetage explaining the presence of Droitwich briquetage as far south as Eckweek.

A number of southern sites may also have been accessing Dorset briquetage. This has been claimed for Cadbury (Poole 2000, 229), although the Levels could also have been a source. In the later period this may also reflect the accessing by some southerly sites of the Dorset 'Durotrigan' wares (e.g. Faxon 1998; Barrett *et al* 2002). Perhaps surprising is the apparent presence of Dorset briquetage at the early-MIA site at Bourton-on-the-Water [16], although unlike Eckweek, briquetage from the far closer source at Droitwich is also present. The presence of such finds well beyond their normal distribution may reflect the nature of exchange as being not just a functional or 'down-the-line' but include other exchange mechanisms (7.5/7.6).

The presence of Cheshire briquetage on sites in the northern part of the study area has been a focus for explanation in previous studies, particularly the fact that all sites in the region with Cheshire briquetage also contain Droitwich briquetage. How can this be explained? One possibility is that different salt sources were regarded as having different properties or even different uses. For example, Cheshire salt may have been used for specific purposes such as meat salting and Droitwich for other uses. Alternatively, some salt sources may have been regarded as exotic, so that their consumption became an indicator of status or long-distance social relations. The small amount of Cheshire briquetage on these sites may support this. Morris (1994) has suggested that salt may not always have been a prime requirement of Iron Age communities (the number of sites without briquetage would support this: Appendix 6 table 7.2.1). It is entirely possible, therefore, that in some cases, salt may have been exchanged as a by-product alongside other materials. Elsewhere, in contrast, at sites such as Evesham (Edwards and Hurst 2000) briquetage makes up 11% of the entire assemblage and appears to have formed an important element on site.

The relative lack of Droitwich or Cheshire briquetage in south Wales, has been argued by Jackson (1999b) as the result of different exchange networks, potentially reflecting cultural differences between this area and Herefordshire/Severn Valley. The lack of high quality, modern excavation may have contributed; briquetage is unlikely to have been recognized as such at the 1930s excavations at Llanmelin. The apparent presence of briquetage from the enclosure at Portskewett [216] (Clarke 1999, 84; tentatively identified as Droitwich), Lydney and Sudbrook (Morris 1985, 348), suggests that South Wales was also to some extent involved in this exchange network. The source of briquetage in this area and the extent to which the Severn estuary<sup>96</sup> was utilized for salt extraction should be a priority for future research. Matthews (1999) has alternatively suggested that the distribution of Cheshire

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<sup>96</sup> Lower salt levels in the Severn Estuary may make it less useful for salt extraction.

briquetage in later contexts in the region (after 500 BC) marks a seaborne trade rather than trade along the Severn valley, although he does not adequately explain why it does not occur along the west and south Welsh coasts. Such explanation for exchange also appears to rely on specialist seaborne traders without adequately exploring the modes of such exchange and their social implications. Were these specialist traders, or was it a process of down the line exchange via sea trade? Again such analysis, although raising interesting possibilities tends to rely on ill-defined, quasi-economic modes of exchange without exploring why such sources are used and how the processes of exchange work.

Sourcing of briquetage appears to have begun early, certainly earlier than the move towards regional pottery sources. Droitwich material is apparent on an number of EIA sites, including Crickley Hill (P. Dixon *pers comm*) and Shenberrow (Elsdon 1994) and in the earliest contexts (MIA) at Conderton (Morris *forthcoming*). In the MIA there does not appear to have been a greater reliance on a single source although Morris has noted that the Cheshire briquetage appears in the later phases of the site. This reflects a number of sites in the study area which show Cheshire briquetage as an increasing element of briquetage sources in the middle-LIA (Morris 1985; Matthews 1999). As with other aspects of material culture (see below), this may imply a move towards the exploitation of more distance sources for materials. The limited amount of Droitwich briquetage from Bagendon and Cirencester in the LIA has been claimed as potentially indicating a shift in regional ceramic distribution pattern (Saville 1984, 159) although this seems odd given the presence of Malvernian pottery at such sites. Alongside the Malvern wares, it supports the idea that despite Bagendon's potential differences, the oppidum was still to some extent engaged in existing, MIA exchange systems. The area excavated at Bagendon also appears to have been primarily for industrial purposes and the presence of briquetage need not be expected there. Evidence from other, more fully excavated sites, suggests that briquetage was not necessarily evenly distributed over all areas or in/around all buildings. At Conderton for example (Morris *forthcoming*, Table 58), there seems to have been a focus of briquetage in Hut 1(cp C), possibly indicating that some parts of the site or certain households were the foci for salt use and could even indicate meat storage areas.

Briquetage exchange indicates a difference in salt exploitation between the southern and northern parts of the study area. There appears to be a general move to more long distance sources over the later Iron Age with the north Cheshire material become more prominent from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC onward.

### 7.3 Pottery

Study of pottery production and exchange in the region has a long history (Peacock 1968; 1969; Morris 1985; 1994). Morris (1994) in particular has noted the apparent dominance of local pottery manufacture in the earlier Iron Age with a shift to more complex and long distance exchange systems in the later Iron Age. The region is particularly useful in containing a number of distinguishable pottery types identifiable to relatively closely identified production areas. This has enabled a closer examination of regional exchange systems than in many areas of southern Britain.

Previous studies of the shift from local to regional pottery have used ethnography to distinguish between local and non-local clay use (Morris 1994). This helps in clarifying what we define as material from close to the site and that from elsewhere and enables to define those sites that were not on suitable clay sources but used those most locally available. However, it is possible that greater distances than those outlined by Morris were travelled to find clay sources, or that clay as a raw material was transported over larger distances (Hamilton 2002). To what extent people travelled to certain locations to make pottery which was then brought back to the settlement is also unclear. Evidence from other periods, suggests that in some cases part of or whole communities travelled to certain locations where pottery was manufactured (Hamilton 2002).

The interim nature of most reports from PPG 16 excavations makes detailed assessment of their assemblages difficult, but some observations can be made to place them within the context of better published assemblages. Due to the interim nature of the reports, pottery descriptions are open to question and in the case of “Malvern wares” or “Glastonbury wares” do not distinguish between which types – which for the former may even be post-conquest<sup>97</sup>. In addition, despite the importance of the relationship between local and regional fabrics a number of major assemblages do not provide figures of proportions in general or over time.

### *7.3.1 Earlier Iron Age*

In the north of the study area the majority of early sites contain pottery made from local fabrics<sup>98</sup> apparently reflecting the situation in the LBA, as at Shorncliffe (Morris 1999). There is some evidence, however, that as early as the middle or LBA pottery with temper from the Malverns was being exported as far as Sandy Lane, Cheltenham (Timby 2001) providing

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<sup>97</sup> Those where identification is uncertain have been marked \*.

<sup>98</sup> See Morris' (1994) definitions of local vicinity and regional based on a range of ethnographic examples (cf. Hamilton 2002).

possible antecedents for the later Iron Age Malvernian industry. It does not appear, however, to have become an important source in EIA, with no Malvern fabrics evident at Crickley Hill (Elsdon 1994; P. Dixon *pers comm.*), Hucclecote (Thomas et al 2003) or Thornwell (Hughes 1996). Much of the limestone tempered local material from a number of sites in the region is relatively undiagnostic and in some cases may be of EIA date (e.g. Dinn and Evans 1990; Timby 1999) and result in the lack of recognition of some early-MIA sites (see Ch. 3) and may further emphasise the local nature of most early and early-MIA assemblages.

In the south of the study area the early-MIA sites with well studied assemblages, at Dibbles Farm (Morris 1988) and Cannard's Grave (Melpham 2002) both contain pottery from exclusively local clays. Cannard's Grave, despite its close proximity to Beacon Hill, was apparently not utilizing material from there as temper, suggesting that such sources only became more important with the emergence of the Glastonbury wares. Dibbles Farm which continues into the later Iron Age (possibly as late as the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC) contains only local fabric but being situated close to at least three of Peacock's fabric groups (Morris 1988), is less useful in charting the adoption of regional wares. At Cadbury all of the fabrics for the EIA wares appear to be local, using limestone sources with only the Mendip fabrics suggesting exchange or provenance up to 20km (Barrett *et al* 2000, 259).

### ***7.3.2 Later Iron Age (4<sup>th</sup> c BC- 1<sup>st</sup> c AD)***

In the MIA regional sources of pottery became a major component of ceramic assemblages in the region (Morris 1983; 1994) and so provide the ability to study more closely the processes of exchange. As noted in Chapter 3, the date of these wares is important in noting the transition between communities dominated by local (household?) production and regional exchanged pottery. Morris (1983) has dated the appearance of Malvernian wares as beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. This appears to be based primarily on the dating of the Duck stamped wares (the design(s) commonly associated with Malvern fabric wares, but not exclusive to them) to the beginning of the MIA in the 5<sup>th</sup> century (e.g. Marshall 1978). Re-assessment of the dating of MIA wares (Ch. 3), suggests they emerged possibly slightly later in the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, a date for such forms which would concur with evidence from better dated MIA assemblages (e.g. Cunliffe 1995). In the south also, the Glastonbury wares became an important component of later Iron Age assemblages, appearing around the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (see Ch. 3).

### ***7.3.3 Production***

The regional potteries identifiable in the region and the focus of this study are can be seen in table 7.3.1. The pottery types in the region are clearly far more complex than those set out below, with a range of limestone tempered, sandy wares and in the LIA grog tempered wares being significant parts of various assemblages but are usually of probably local manufacture. Because of the relatively well defined petrology of these fabrics relatively clear areas of the landscape where the temper originated can be identified and have been the core reason for the ability to identify long distance exchange of this pottery and potential contacts over a wider area.

*Table 7.3.1: Regional pottery types (Fig. 7.3.1-7.3.6)*

<i>Type</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Ref.</i>
<b><i>Northern (Malvern) wares</i></b>		
A	Metamorphic (Malverns)	Peacock 1969
B1	Palaeozoic limestone (Malverns / Woolhope hills)	Peacock 1969
B2	Jurassic limestone (Cotswolds)	Peacock 1969
D	Mudstone (Martley? Worcestershire)	Morris 1983
<b><i>Southern (Glastonbury/ South western decorated Wares)</i></b>		
G1	Gabbroic (Cornwall)	Peacock 1969
G2	Beacon Hill sandstone (Mendips)	Peacock 1969
G3	Mendip limestone	Peacock 1969
G4	Jurassic limestone (Cotswolds?)	Peacock 1969
G5	Permian with Sandine (Devon)	Peacock 1969

Because of the much wider possible geological sources for the Jurassic limestone material present (e.g. Peacock's Duck stamped B2 group (1968) and Glastonbury Group 4 (1969)) in many assemblages these are usually regarded as being locally produced but it always remains possible that a more defined source also existed for this material but cannot be identified.

#### ***7.3.4 Distribution of Malvern wares (Figs. 7.3.1, 7.3.2)***

Distribution of Malvern wares A and B1 can be seen in Fig.7.3.1. Recent sites have increased the number of findspots (particularly those with B1 which is most common) but, apart from Hallen, do not appear to have extended the distribution significantly. Malvern B1 wares are generally more widespread than A. This may partly be a chronological differences, with some indication that A fabric is less common on later Iron Age sites (see Ch. 3). It has been claimed there is a difference between distribution of the two types; Malvern A focused primarily to the east of the Malverns and B1 to the west (Peacock 1968; Jackson 1999b). Fig. 7.3.1 shows that this distinction does not appear to hold up to new discoveries, suggesting that the major difference in distribution between the two is the slightly wider distribution of B1 compared to A.

Group D, originating probably in the Martley area (Morris 1983) has a far more limited distribution in the north and western part of the study area apart from the exceptional finds from Hallen. The picture from the west of the region is far from clear-cut. At Wellington quarries, interim analysis suggests the vast majority of the pottery was non-local including Group D material. In stark contrast, a limited amount of Malvern wares at the Ariconium sites has been noted (Jackson 2000). He has suggested this “clear preference for locally produced wares – evidently manufactured on the west side of the Malverns may reflect market and economic factors and/or cultural factors in favour of local material culture”. This reflects a general absence of Malvern wares fabrics or forms in south Wales which has been claimed as potentially cultural significant (Spencer 1983; Jackson 1999b). The variation in distribution of material is also greatly effected by the distribution of high quality excavations (compare with Ch. 2 Fig. 2.3.3.4/5), which may partly explain some of the fall off in south Wales.

One of the most interesting sites in the Malvern distributions is that at Hallen (Gardiner *et al* 2002). This is one of the few sites with pottery from a range of sources including the Malverns (B1), Cotswold limestone, Mendips (Glastonbury G3) and Worcestershire (Group D). At Hallen even the B2 material (with source(s) in the Jurassic Cotswolds) must have been brought to the site and here at least cannot be regarded as local. The site was probably seasonally occupied (Gardiner *et al* 2002) indicating perhaps a community elsewhere supplying such material. Hallen maybe unusual not because of the nature of its assemblage but in being one of the few well studied assemblages from the margins of the northern and southern pottery distributions and as such may not be a-typical (see Uley Bury for example). It suggests a lack of a direct link between pottery as an ethnic or cultural marker and that communities were able to engage in both exchange spheres.

The small number of Malvern sherds (representing only 0.1% of the assemblage) from the early-MIA site at Groundwell Farm (Gingell 1981) appears unusual in its distance from the source and on the periphery of the distribution of Malvern wares, and could even mark a single exchange event (see 6.8/6.9). The assemblage is predominantly locally produced although it is claimed that some of the decorated saucepan pots (e.g. Gingell 1981; Fig 16.10) may derive from further south in Wessex.

At some of the sites without Malvern wares, where it might be expected, its absence can be explained by a chronological difference, as at Crickley Hill. For other assemblages, particularly those at Preston, and Ermin Farm (Timby 1999) radiocarbon dates show contemporaneity with Malvern wares elsewhere (see Ch. 3), indicating that a number of sites

on the Cotswolds dip-slope were not involved in the Malvern exchange network. This suggests a relatively sharp drop off of the Malvern ware distribution on the edge of the Cotswold dip-slope and, perhaps significantly, places Bagendon on the periphery of the B1 distribution.

### *7.3.5 Increasing use of Malvern Regional Pottery over the later Iron Age*

Morris (1983; 1994) has suggested an apparent increase over time for the use of the regionally sourced Malvern wares. Recent published assemblages, from the study area, appear to confirm this. Gilders Paddock (Hancocks 1999) shows an increasing reliance over time on Malvern wares and the same appears to be true of Conderton Camp (Morris *forthcoming*), the Beckford sites (Fig. 7.3.7.) (Morris 1983) and at Birdlip (Parry 1998) the Malvern B1 increased from 10% in period 1 (MIA) to 54% in period 2 (LIA). Although exact figures are not published for Evesham a similar process has been noted, with an “impression of pottery use one of transition from local to regional wares” (Edwards and Hurst 2000). There is a danger of falling in to a circular argument in using the increasing amount of regional fabrics to denote later features, although stratigraphically this may be ironed out as appears to be the case at Gilders Paddock where stratigraphically later features contain increased amount of regional pottery (Hancocks 1999). Evidence from elsewhere beyond the study area may support the general impression that between the 4<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC regional pottery sources were increasingly important to these communities.

This growing distribution appears to have continued in the LIA and early Roman period (Timby 1999) and possibly become even more widespread. For example, Malvern fabrics are present in late forms and in early Roman contexts at sites such as Court Farm, Latton [87] (Timby 1999), and beyond the usual distribution at Chippenham [309] (Timby 2000a) and in LIA forms at Wixford, in Warwickshire (Palmer 1999, 56). In addition, B1 material occurs in 1<sup>st</sup> century AD assemblages at Duntisbourne Grove (Timby 1999), Bagendon and Cirencester (Rigby 1982). The Malvern industries, therefore, appear to have grown in popularity over the later Iron Age and, similar to other major LIA pottery industries such as those in Dorset and Savernake became established pottery producers in the early Roman period.

If the sites available, like Gilders Paddock, can be taken as indicative of increased reliance on regional pottery during the later Iron Age, then the question arises as to *why* sites turn to these regional sources. One possibility is that regionally imported pottery was of a higher status than locally made material. The observation that Malvern fabric material was far more likely to be decorated than that in local fabrics in most assemblages (e.g. Morris 1983; Edwards and

Hurst 2000, 90), could indicate a higher status or particular role for it. It has also been claimed, for example in the Evesham assemblage, that the Malvern material was better finished than the local material, although this is not the case on all sites. At Hallen, for example, despite the occurrence of Malvern (B1) and Worcestershire (D) material, there does not appear to be a preference for decoration on this material and the assemblage is, in general, relatively plain (Laidlaw 2002, 37). There is not always a clear correlation between decoration and imports, therefore, although the general impression (Morris 1983; Saville 1984) is that Malvern wares were more commonly decorated than those in (local) limestone fabrics. Morris (1994) has also suggested that hillforts and non hillforts have equal access to regional wares suggesting they are not necessarily of high status.

### **7.3.6 Southern sites (Figs. 7.3.3-7.3.5)**

The regional wares of the southern area are made up of the Glastonbury (South-Western decorated) wares. Within the study area fewer sites can be identified as containing this material in comparison to the north and few recent well-studied assemblages have emerged since Peacock's (1969) study. However, a number of patterns can be identified. The Group 2 wares have been identified as deriving from Beacon Hill, near Shepton Mallett (Fig.7.3.3) (Peacock 1969; Leach 1993; Coles and Minnit 1995, 169). Excavation near to the source indicates that this was also in use as a quern production site (see 6.4). The distribution of the Beacon Hill (Group 2) material appears to extend well beyond the study area with a particularly bias to the south of the Mendips (Peacock 1969, 43) which appears to match the southerly limit of Beacon Hill querns (see 7.4). However, of the sites where Glastonbury wares could be identified, Group 3 (from the Mendip limestone) dominated and has the widest distribution; as far north as Uley Bury and Llanmelin (Fig. 7.3.3). At Cadbury the G3 material is absent, however, with the Beacon Hill G2 and G4 most prevalent (Barrett *et al* 2000, 259) (Fig. 7.3.4).

The Lake Villages contain a diversity of pottery types, including elements from all the types identified by Peacock, (1969, 42) although there are some differences between the sites. Meare Village East has groups 2, 3, 4 and 5 (Rouillard 1987) compared to Glastonbury and Meare West dominated by Group 2 from Beacon Hill, echoing the dominance of Beacon Hill querns on the site. This reflects the diversity of all materials on these sites and may confirm the interpretation as centres for exchange. The size of the assemblage, however, compared to most studied by Peacock (1969, appendix 1) could also partly explain the diversity. The more recent assemblage from Hallen (see above) also has a diversity of pottery types, despite its

apparently non-specialist nature, indicating that diversity in pottery assemblage need not necessarily indicate status or an exchange role for the site<sup>99</sup>.

Meare, Glastonbury and Cadbury Castle, however, do appear unusual in the study area in containing a more diverse range of pottery forms and are unusual in containing Gabbroic fabric material from as far as Cornwall (Fig. 7.3.5). In addition Glastonbury may also contain Armorican pottery, similar to that from Hengistbury Head (Coles and Minnit 1995, 169) possibly indicating long distance contacts for the site. One type in particular not also present at Hengistbury head may indicate a different access route to the site – perhaps up the Severn Estuary and possibly emphasizing its role as a trade route. Armorican coins are known from a number of sites in the region (see Ch. 6.3) which may support Matthews (1999) suggestion that they came by sea in to western Britain. The increasing use of regional fabrics is not as clear cut in the southern area as in the north. Whilst Glastonbury wares from a range of sources become more prevalent from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century onward, in terms of fabric sites like Cadbury were importing pottery from the Mendips in the early period (Barrett *et al* 2000, 258). However, although the more dramatic shift to non-local sources occurs later with use of the Poole Harbour material from Dorset around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, this may mark a very different exchange systems than the more focused regional exchange seen here (see below).

There also appears to be growing evidence that some of the Glastonbury wares (or perhaps more accurately the Mendip fabric pottery) was distributed more widely than the levels area and penetrated up the Severn valley (Fig. 7.3.6). Examples of Glastonbury ware come from Abbeymead-Gloucester [5] (Atkin 1987), Severn Ham [305] (GSMR8851), Knole Park [98] (SGSMR1092) and possibly Frampton-on-Severn [34] (Chorls 1993, 16) and Kings Stanley [61] (Heighway 1989) (see Fig. 7.3.5). In addition, at Uley Bury (Morris 1983) and Hallen (Gardiner *et al* 2002) Group 3 (Mendip limestone) wares are present, at both in plain forms. The striking patterning of this material is its association with the Severn River, suggesting that it was transported along the river, possibly emphasizing the role of rivers in exchange in the region (see 6.8). These occurrences appear to confirm that Glastonbury wares, both decorated and plain, were exchanged up the Severn river, and there was at least some cross-over with the distribution of the B1 Malvern wares.

### **7.3.7 Style and Exchange**

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<sup>99</sup> Although of Glastonbury wares the site only produced Group 3.

Although an unfashionable topic bound up with discredited cultural historical approaches, the process of exchange in style and decoration of pottery appears to be an important element in the development of the later Iron Age ceramics in the region. Although in both areas the development of the regional wares appears partly to be associated with their greater tendency to be decorated and the transfer of such material may also have led to the spread of such decorative techniques. For example, although in local fabric, a sherd from Dumbleton exhibits 'Duck stamped' decoration (Saville 1984a, 169) indicating that not all such material was derived from the Malverns and that in a few cases it was imitated on local pottery. In the south, the curvilinear sherd from Llanmelin, claimed as Glastonbury has been suggested as local possibly indicating imitation of style. In such a case it may have been the decorative style that was exchanged or imitated, rather than the pots themselves.

In the south of the study area, more attention has been paid to the association between fabric and decoration, and the possibility that such links may provide evidence of cultural groupings (e.g. Blackmore *et al* 1979). Any such links are difficult to establish and if they do exist on the distributions noted by Peacock (1969) seem more likely to reflect local pottery style differences than coherent social groups. For the Glastonbury wares the influence of Armorican pottery, evidenced both in style and the presence of Armorican pottery at the lake village, has long been suggested (Peacock 1969; Coles and Minnit 1995), possibly indicating a diffusion of style concepts up the Bristol Channel via Cornwall although influence from the curvilinear styles in Wessex is also possible (see Cunliffe 1991). If such an influence can be accepted the question remains why adopt such style forms? Also, why should there exist such a contrast between the curvilinear styles of the southern area, the linear tooled, duck stamped motifs of the northern Malvern wares and also the eye-brow designs of material from south Wales? In the past such style differences have variously been regarded as reflecting cultural differences (Jackson 1999) or as reflecting choices by those potteries producing the material (e.g. Morris 1994). In the latter case it could be argued that such material was made distinctive to identify its manufacturers or location and more work on the potential association between fabric and decoration is required. However, as the assemblage from Meare East, indicates only a small portion of such assemblages were decorated (7% at MVE: Rouillard 1987), apparently a common occurrence (cf. Morris 1988; Laidlaw 2002), and therefore these production sites must have been producing substantial amounts of plain wares (Rouillard 1987), possibly indicating that decorative wares were not their prime concern. It may also be important that of the 'Glastonbury' (Mendip source) wares, those most widely distributed, are in plain forms (at Uley Bury and Hallen).

Even if we dismiss the idea that decoration and/or fabric differences between the north and south reflect cultural differences between these areas, it seems certain that communities must have recognized the decorative, form and, potentially, fabric differences between these materials. To what extent communities needed to accept or reject the two forms, or whether those in the north rarely came in to contact with Glastonbury decorated material and vice-versa, is unclear. The few examples of Glastonbury wares in Gloucestershire suggest that it did occasionally penetrate this far north, but whether this represents one-off exchanges, material that achieved higher status with distance from source or as a by-product alongside other material being exchanged via the Severn (see above) is uncertain. The recent publication of the first assemblage on the periphery of both exchange spheres, at Hallen, raises more questions, indicating that this, apparently small pastoral community (not specializing in exchange or production) was willing to engage in both the northern and southern exchange systems. Hallen, however, is somewhat exceptional because all material appears to have been brought to the site (including even the stone for floor construction) (Gardiner *et al* 2002) and as such it is difficult to ascertain whether the imported pottery was received through trading via the Severn or brought via inland communities. Whether this means that these exchange spheres mark purely exchange drop-off zones, as suggested by Morris (1994; 1996), will have to wait until more similar assemblages become available and Hallen could still be exceptional. Within this debate the value of assemblages from sites such as Cribbs Causeway nearby, as yet unavailable for study, has not fully been recognised and requires assessment to examine what was taking place on the margins *between* the larger exchange systems.

### *7.3.8 Late Iron Age pottery exchange*

Discussion of ceramics in the region has focused primarily on the nature of exchange in the middle to LIA and specifically the apparent shift from reliance on local resources to the dominance of specialized foci of resources. It is in to such a picture that the developments of the last centuries of the Iron Age must be put. The appearance of imported pottery and wheel thrown wares has long been regarded as crucial in the process of social and economic changes evident in the LIA, seen as marking increased contact with external influences in south east England, Gaul and the Roman world (Haselgrove 1982; 1987; Cunliffe 1988).

Evidence for imported pottery and the development of wheel thrown wares in the region is limited. The number of sites with clearly identifiable early imports is low in comparison to the south east of Britain, reflecting its periphery to the main distribution of Gallo-Belgic wares (Appendix 7). The occurrence and implications of these wares is often regarded as signifying a different form of exchange to that envisaged for the exchange of the later Iron Age regional

pottery fabrics. Regarded as high status it is assumed that these were imported from the south east in return for slaves and raw materials as part of a core-periphery model. Not only that but they also signify different social aspects – the fine table wares marking new ways of eating and dining (Hill 2002; *forthcoming*; Fitzpatrick and Timby 2002).

Whether this limited amount of imported pottery marks a lack of access to this material (as is often assumed), chronological variation, or cultural differences between those sites adopting it, is crucial in determining the nature of this exchange (Fitzpatrick and Timby 2002). Previous explanations for the lack of imports saw the region as a peripheral producer for the south-east, with only those few intermediary sites, such as Bagendon and Salmonsbury, able to receive such material in return for goods, usually regarded as such as slaves, hides etc. The lack of imports on the majority of sites has been regarded as due to both a lack of status and access to such material. However, if we accept the increasing dominance of the regional pottery industries over the later Iron Age, we need to ask *why* these communities should adopt imports at all? Indeed, do imports signify status (or status only) or the participation in new/different exchange systems? In the light of the apparent nature of varying exchange systems already in existence in the mid-LIA of the region how can the existence and role of these sites can be understood.

The oppida have been regarded as crucial in the adoption and exchange of imported fine wares; regarded as elite centres controlling this material and consuming it. However, in the region there appears little to support the kind of exchange model, identified for continental oppida, which suggests a 'trickle-down' of imports (e.g. Fichtl 2000, 148). Instead, save a few limited exceptions like Frocester and Wycomb, the majority of imports appear to be concentrated in a small number of sites at the Bagendon complex (including the Duntisbourne enclosures), Weston-under-Penyard and Salmonsbury suggesting perhaps that if such sites acted as exchange centres at all, there was little 'trickle-down'. The finds of relatively early imports at Weston-under-Penyard also indicates there was not a complete absence of communities to the west of the Cotswolds unable to access imports, but that it may have been restricted to very few. Considering the dominance of existing quern, pottery and metalwork production in this area if imports reflects status it surely seems odd that the majority of such communities were not able to access this material. It must considered whether such communities felt any need to obtain and utilize this material and the inherent lifestyle changes that is surely implies.

Changes in pottery in the latest Iron Age were not restricted to the appearance of imports but also the imitation of Gallo-Belgic wares in 'local' wheel thrown forms, further emphasising

the changes in foodways and pottery forms inherent in these changes. However, these appear to have taken place alongside the existing manufacture and use of the later Iron Age pottery types discussed above. Evidence of Malvern B1 wares from a range of LIA sites such as Ditches, Bagendon, Duntisbourne Grove and Weston-under-Penyard. As well as 'Roman' sites such as Cirencester and Kingsholm, indicates the engagement of such communities in existing later Iron Age exchange networks. Alongside this material there is growing evidence that the early Severn valley wares, increasingly appearing to be pre-and early conquest (see Ch. 3), emerged from or alongside the Malvern wares (Timby 1990, Evans *et al* 2000). The production centres for the early Severn Valley Wares are not entirely clear but some appear to have emerged in the Malvern area although others may have been situated elsewhere in the Severn valley (Timby 1990). The suggestion that Malvern wares and the early Severn Valley wares could have been fired in the same kilns (Evans *et al* 2000), implies that the potters producing Malvern B1 adapted to the early Severn Valley wares in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. This has important further implications, the early Severn Valley wares representing an apparent imitation, both in form and colour of the imported Gallo-Belgic wares (Timby 1990; Steve Willis *pers comm*). The potteries in the Malverns, therefore, appear to have been able to adjust to produce material required by new demands. This reflects a wider pattern across southern and western Britain with existing pottery producers developing in to the production sites in the early Roman period and can be seen with the Poole Harbour, Durotrigan wares (Brown 1997) and the Savernake wares (Swan 1975).

In the south, the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC saw a decline of Glastonbury style pottery and presumably therefore of the production sites in Mendips in favour of even more long distance sources. Although the dating is open to debate (see Ch. 3) some (such as the Durotrigan) appear as early as the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, whilst others are likely to be just pre-conquest such as Savernake Wares (Ch. 3; Timby 1990). What this means in social terms is unclear but may signify significant social changes, at least on some sites<sup>100</sup>. The use of existing regional potteries may have tied the wider Levels-Mendips community together but the move to more long distance sources for the LIA/early Roman forms, in the south at least, may signify the shift, by some communities, away from local and regional associations.

What then do these changes represent in both exchange systems and community relationships? Recent work on early wheel thrown wares and imports has shown that the introduction of this material cannot be regarded as a single cultural shift but a far more nuanced change in pottery (and life-) style. Willis (2000) sees the initial import of Gallo-

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<sup>100</sup> The chronological details of these changes and their social implications are discussed in Ch. 3 and Ch. 8.

Belgic wares and subsequent imitation by local producers, including the early Severn Valley wares as taking place in the early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and this marks a Gallo-Belgic rather than Roman pottery consumption, with a change around the Flavian period (c. AD70) to different more 'metropolitan' Roman forms. In the region this also appear to have taken place alongside a continued use of the 'traditional' Malvern wares. However, it appears to be those communities on the periphery of these earlier distributions who were most important in the consumption of the imports and early wheel thrown wares, although this is not to say that other sites did not have access to early wheel thrown wares, as at Beckford and Birdlip.

It may even be that the new pottery was exchanged along existing exchange routes and certainly the distribution of earlier material, including Droitwich briquetage, May Hill quern stones and Malvern wares might suggest, for instance, that the Thames Valley-Churn/Windrush corridors were important exchange routes far earlier than the introduction of imported pottery. The question remains however, why Salmonsbury and Bagendon should emerge in the latest Iron Age to control this exchange (if this indeed was their role)? There is an real danger therefore of seeing the exchange and appearance of this new pottery as a prime influential factor in stimulating change in settlement patterns in these areas were instead its existence may instead signify groups already changing (or in locations to be able to change) and mark communities that were willing to access such material (and the associated new lifestyles; cf. Hill 2002). We should also be careful not to regard the exchange of this material as somehow more significant than the existing exchange networks in other material as well as existing pottery exchange. The limited amount of imported pottery may highlight its relative unimportance as much as its high status and need to be aware that artefacts previously regarded as utilitarian, such as querns and pottery, were involved in complex exchange processes, indicating that communities were already engaged in complex economic and, more crucially, social relationships at the time that imported material was introduced.

### *7.3.9 Discussion*

On many sites there is an increasing dependence on regionally sourced pottery over the later Iron Age. This trend is not universal with variation with sites in the Severn valley showing greatest move towards regional pottery. This appears to indicate that over the later Iron Age there was an increasing move away from local production on such sites, what might be regarded as household production, with an increasing emphasis on specialized production workshops (Hamilton 2002), although throughout this period a continued combination of the two existed.

The picture of increasing reliance on non-local pottery does not appear to be a phenomenon common to all MIA sites in southern Britain. Morris' (1997) examination of sources at Danebury, for example, appears to suggest that to some extent the reverse was true with more local sources used in the later phases of the site. Elsewhere, particularly in the south west however, the move to regional pottery sources has been noted (e.g. Peacock 1968; Harrad 2003) although the production and exchange of this material may have been extremely complex (Harrad 2003).

If this is correct, then the kind of specialization, often regarded as a LIA phenomenon, concurrent with the introduction of the fast wheel (Hamilton 2002; Hill 2002), may, in the region, have emerged far earlier in the MIA; potentially as early as the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC. As has been suggested, this increasing dependence on the use of non-local sources, when sufficiently good local sources were available, may relate to social processes and the need to cement relationships with other communities either for other benefits or as part of larger social identities (e.g. Hodder 1982b; Morris 1997) which will be discussed later.

#### **7.4. Querns (Appendix 8)**

Despite the suggestions by O.G.S. Crawford in 1953 of the potential of quern exchange in shedding light on Iron Age society and the initial achievements of Peacock's study (1987), there has been a general neglect of querns research in Iron Age studies (cf. Morris 1996, 52). Initial observations in the region, however, indicate complex and sophisticated exchange networks involving querns, although the absence of detailed research and lack of detailed recording of context and lithology makes discussing their exchange, production and deposition difficult. Few publications have detailed quern reports and even those that do, often provide little contextual information. In addition, lithology of the querns is often neglected or defined in broad terms, such as 'sandstone' making comparisons between sites problematic. This has primarily been because of the perceived lack of value that querns have for dating in comparison with pottery, and a long held belief that querns remained relatively unchanged through the Iron Age and that local sources will invariably have been used. This is at odds with studies such as that by Peacock on the Lodsworth stone and more recent work in Yorkshire (Heslop 1980), which have indicated the role of querns in long distance exchange.

Study of querns has no real history in the region and has often been neglected in synthetic studies (e.g. Saville 1984a; Darvill 1987; Jackson 1999). However, in recent years, the work of Fiona Roe in particular, has led to a number of detailed quern reports such as that for Cadbury (Roe 2000), which can be combined to provide a more detailed analysis of quern

sources in the region. Because of the small number of assemblages that include discussion of quern lithology and contextual information and to enable a broader examination of quern exchange several sites just beyond the study area have been included. This is also important in examining the nature of exchange systems because a number of sites beyond the study area were obtaining querns from stone sources situated within the region.

#### *7.4.1 Chronology*

Chronologically it is assumed that rotary querns date later than saddle querns although there is overwhelming evidence from the region and beyond that the two probably co-existed until the LIA. This is supported by the observation that both saddle and rotary querns were found in middle Iron Age Cadbury contexts (Bellamy 2000, 210). The presence of rotary querns at Glastonbury also suggests they date prior to the 1st century BC. An apparent rotary quern from the EIA sites at Shenberrow (Fell 1961) could potentially indicate an early date for some rotary querns or later activity on the site, although its identification as rotary may also be in doubt<sup>101</sup>. Elsewhere in southern Britain dating of the introduction of rotary querns remains open to debate and, whilst a date as early as the 5th century has been suggested at Danebury (Laws *et al* 1991, 396), even there a clear horizon for rotary querns emerges far later in ceramic phase 7; around the 3rd/2nd century BC. Roe (*forthcoming a*) has suggested that rotary querns were introduced relatively early in the MIA at Claydon Pike but were not adopted wholesale and on a number of sites it seems that saddle querns continued well in to the LIA, however, the apparent lack of saddle querns from Bagendon (Ruddock 1961) may suggest that by the 1st century AD rotary querns became dominant.

#### *7.4.2 Quern stone provenance*

Despite the variety of problems with quern reports and limitation on quern studies, it is possible to begin to make some initial observations on the form of quern exchange and its role within Iron Age societies. Study of the assemblages that do exist indicate interesting patterning. It seems clear that sandstone was the most sought out material for quern stones and a number of sources occur in the region – most notably Upper Llandovery Silurian sandstone around May Hill and the Malverns in the north and a number of outcrops of Old Red Sandstone (ORS) in the Mendips.

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<sup>101</sup> This quern has recently been re-examined and identified as a saddle quern (Fiona Roe *pers comm.*)

Roman and Medieval quarries, some of which may well have been worked in the Iron Age, are visible at certain locations in the region particularly at May Hill and at Beacon Hill on the ORS in the Mendips. The latter quarries are located close to the Fosse Way and show ample evidence of Roman industrial activity (Leach 1993) and there is evidence that this area (if not these exact quarries) were widely exploited in the Iron Age.

#### *Lower Severn, Cotswolds and Thames Valley (Fig. 7.4.1)*

Sites in the north of the study area appear to be in the main dominated by source of quern stones from quarries situated on May Hill, Upper Llandovery Silurian sandstone outcrop to the south of the Malvern Hills although a range of other sources were also used.

#### *Hillforts*

The assemblage from the MIA site at Conderton contains a variety of querns sources. These include sources possibly as far away as the Midlands and Pennines. The majority appear to come from sources probably in the Severn valley and specifically the Malverns (Thomas *forthcoming*, 424). May Hill sources, although not identified by the report (Thomas *forthcoming*) are also likely considering the similarity between Malvern and May Hill sandstone (Roe 2000). However, the possibility of sources further afield cannot be ruled out and the Millstone Grit examples in particular are likely to derive from the Pennines with others possibly from Cheshire. The latter is particularly interesting considering the evidence of Cheshire briquetage from Conderton (see above) and could indicate that briquetage and querns stones were exchanged/transported together.

At Lydney Park hillfort, Wheeler (Wheeler and Wheeler 1932) describes two beehive querns in ORS from the Iron Age contexts. As with a number of examples in the region the querns come from ORS sources but have not been ascribed to a defined source and may be from local outcrops near to Lydney. At Bagendon, only rotary querns seem to have been recovered. Ruddock (1961) suggests a "Herefordshire" source which Roe (*Pers comm*) identifies as Upper ORS. At the LIA site at Salmonsbury, the only identifiable quern stone appears to be May Hill sandstone (Roe 2000) and they appear to dominate the LBA/EIA hillfort at Crickley Hill (Phil Dixon *pers comm*).

One site with a notable absence of querns is Midsummer Hill (Stanford 1981). The size and importance of the site and its location close to the May Hill and Malvern sources makes this exception notable. This can be explained in variety of ways, including variation in recovery

and the size and location of the area investigated. If a real absence, it might reflect a difference in the role of the site, the lack of quern stones conceivably indicating a lack of crop processing on the site. Considering the large numbers of 4-posters on the site, it might indicate a role primarily for storage but with crop consumption and processing taking place elsewhere. The fact that much of interior has not been investigated leaves this open to question but may hint at interesting social patterning and roles of some hilltop sites perhaps as storage centres with population living elsewhere.

### *Non-hillfort sites*

May Hill stone appears to be the commonest source for other settlements in the northern area. The MIA settlements at Gilders Paddock, Birdlip, Aston Mill and Evesham all have 100% May Hill querns (Fig. 7.4.1). The MIA enclosure at Preston, despite being some distance from the source has two saddle querns, both of May Hill origin and they are present on the LBA/EIA site at Hucclecote (Thomas et al 2003, 70). However, the picture is by no means clear-cut. The mid-LIA site at Beckford (Oswald 1972) does not appear to have accessed May Hill querns. Instead, Peacock's (1974) assessment suggests local limestone sources for both a rotary and saddle querns, along with one possible Millstone Grit example<sup>102</sup>. The use of limestone is not entirely unusual and dominates major site assemblages elsewhere, such as Maiden Castle (see below; Wheeler 1943). However, considering the inferiority of limestone for quern stone<sup>103</sup>, it seems strange that this site is at odds with the near by sites at Birdlip, Conderton and Gilders Paddock in not accessing the May Hill or other sources. It is not immediately apparent whether this is related to the sites status or other factors such as restricted social access to May Hill querns although chronology seems unlikely to be a factor. Frocester also appears not to have been accessing the May Hill source with the small number of rotary querns from 1<sup>st</sup> century BC or early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD contexts from sources of Pennant sandstone in the Bristol area (Price 2000). This may be explained in a number of ways and certainly the lack of querns from MIA contexts is noticeable. The fact that almost all the (locally sourced) Roman querns come from similar sources may indicate that already in the LIA the site was sourcing from the Bristol area and not the northern site at May Hill. Although some possible saddle querns and saddle rubbers are claimed from the site (Price 2000, 193) most are from non-Iron Age contexts or are unstratified. All are sandstone but there is no closer identification. The identification of Greensand (Lodsworth) stone (from

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<sup>102</sup> although Fiona Roe suggests this may be May Hill

<sup>103</sup> Oolitic Limestone is soft and crumbly and likely to wear quickly in comparison to Sandstone. It is notable that limestone examples are often noted to be worn very smooth (e.g. Wheeler 1943).

Sussex) at Hailes another site within the sphere of May Hill distribution is also notable, although its identification as Iron Age is open to question (Peacock 1987).

Sites in the Thames Valley also appear to have been accessing May Hill quern. All of the querns at the MIA site at Witney (Roe 1995a) are of May Hill origin and May Hill querns are claimed from Thornhill Farm and Abingdon Vineyard (Roe 1995a). Even as far as Gravelly Guy the majority of querns appear to be of May Hill origin (Roe 1995a). The presence of May Hill querns at such sites is interesting, given the existence of other suitable stone sources in closer proximity, such as the Corallian stone near Oxford. This was accessed by other (potentially contemporary) MIA sites such as Mingies Ditch, suggesting that the choice of May Hill stone was not purely a question of accessing the nearest source. One cannot argue that other sites were not accessing long distance sources with one example of Millstone Grit (probably from the Pennines<sup>104</sup>) from Mingies Ditch (Allen 1993, 80). In contrast, the early-MIA sites at Groundwell Farm and Groundwell West appear to have both been accessing more local and haphazard sources, using locally obtained sarsen erratics in contrast to the exchange patterns noted to the north.

Despite the variation in quern assemblages, May Hill derived quern can be seen to have been an important component of quern assemblages (Fig. 7.4.1/2). Fiona Roe (*pers comm*) has suggested there are functional benefits of May Hill querns compared to limestone materials. However, the evidence from Beckford suggests that this did not stop some sites utilising Oolitic limestone and sites in the May Hill area neither necessarily contain May Hill querns nor, on those sites where they occur, were they dominant in the assemblages. Although based on limited data, Fig. 7.4.1 shows the relation between percentage of querns from May Hill on each site against distance from the source. It is noticeable that sites such as Thornwell, Frocester and Beckford (1972), despite their close proximity to the site, contain no May Hill quern. In contrast sites further away such as Witney and Gravelly Guy are dominated by May Hill querns. This variation suggests more complexity in quern exchange systems than simply using the 'best' local source. Such variation may relate to a complex range of factors including status, chronology, access, exchange systems and social relationships. It seems clear that use of local stone sources was not the over-riding factor in stone used and that the choice of May Hill querns was potentially related to a range of other, social factors in addition to any functional properties.

### ***Southern sites***

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<sup>104</sup> Despite frequent claims that Millstone Grit is likely to come from Pennines with different types in the Avon Gorge (Blockley 1985).

There are far fewer sites in the southern area with well recorded quern assemblages. Of those that can be assessed, various types of Old Red Sandstone seem, as with the north, to have been the favoured material with the source at Beacon Hill important (Fig.7.4.1; Leach 1993).

The Glastonbury Lake Village provides little detailed information. The querns identified by Roe (1995b) included Old Red Sandstone (including at least one example from Beacon Hill) and Jurassic sandstone from the Harptree beds. Considering the proposed nature of Glastonbury lake village as an exchange centre on the interface between communities (Sharples 1991) and its location away from any local sources, it is perhaps surprising that there are so few 'exotic' querns at the site. This may be partly due to the small sample available for study (6 out of 18 saddle; 5 out of 38 rotary) of the much larger assemblage that existed. The other lake villages suffer from the same problem of limited lithological information but indications are that both Meare East and West have querns from ORS sources, with at least some from Beacon Hill (Roe 1995b, 166; cf. St.George-Gray and Cotton 1966). In addition to these sites, the querns from the Chew Park sites are of ORS which may be from Beacon Hill although none are of certain Iron Age date and the only quern from Dibbles Farm is of ORS, probably Beacon Hill. The two saddle querns from Marshfield are from Millstone Grit, which Blockley (1985, 220) suggests may derive from the Avon Gorge. Similarly, the hillfort at Bury Hill appears to have obtained its rotary quern of Millstone Grit from the Bristol area (Davies and Phillips 1926, 19). The material from Cadbury-Congresbury is more difficult to disentangle. Much of the material from the site is claimed as post-Roman although many of the querns could feasibly be Iron Age. The assemblage consists of both rotary and saddle querns with local limestone and ORS the main sources and some Millstone Grit examples.

The largest assemblage of querns comes from Cadbury Castle, just beyond the study area (Roe 2000b). The long occupation allows for a more detailed analysis of changes in sources than can be undertaken on most sites. Examination of the source of Cadbury querns against period reveals some striking patterns (Fig. 7.4.3). Most striking is the apparent diversity of quern sources on the site in middle Cadbury (i.e. MIA) when there appears to be a dramatic shift to a wide range of sources in contrast to the apparent reliance on local sources (i.e. the ORS micaceous) in the EIA. Whilst the local ORS (micaceous) remained an important source (as it does through all periods on the site) there appears to be a dramatic move to obtain sources from a diverse range of locations beyond the local vicinity. These new sources, include locations in the Mendips such as Dolomitic conglomerate and Beacon Hill ORS, and sources further to the south such as Ham Hill in Dorset.

In middle Cadbury, Beacon Hill querns become an important element (Roe 2000, 263) and it is perhaps relevant that this is roughly contemporary with the emergence of the Glastonbury wares; Group 2 of which has been identified as coming from this area (Peacock 1969; Leach 1993). In the LIA a dramatic change takes place with an increase in the use of Beacon Hill querns to the extent that, for the first time, this regionally derived material takes precedence over the ORS micaceous. This shift appears to be connected to the growing use of rotary querns which are overwhelmingly made of Beacon Hill ORS and can be suggested at both Cadbury (Fig. 7.4.4) and Glastonbury. By the LIA the site relied on rotary querns from Beacon Hill. The diversity seen in the MIA has ended with a reliance on a single regional source alongside a continued, but declining, use of local material. This shift in the mid-LIA appears to coincide with the growing move to regionally derived Glastonbury pottery, some at least of which probably also derived from the Beacon Hill possibly indicating a trend towards central production for the of majority of the communities querns and pottery.

### *Discussion of provenance*

Analysis of quern provenance in the region indicates complex and sophisticated patterning of exchange which may shed light on a number of changes underway in Iron Age society. The Cadbury assemblage is particularly instructive with a marked diversity in sources in middle Cadbury. Why should such a horizon occur with a range of far more distant and exotic sources being utilised? To understand this we need to examine how and why these querns were being obtained. If querns were exchanged through communities the choice of particular sources became more important. It seems unlikely that groups from Cadbury went for example to Ham Hill to collect this stone but that it was exchanged. The fact that Ham Hill contains a contemporary hillfort may be relevant. To what extent were the two communities co-operating in mutual exchange? Does the diversity in querns mark relationships of the Cadbury community with other settlements situated close to those sources or communities that have themselves obtained that stone from other communities? The existence of Ham Hill stone therefore may not represent a functionally better material but mark exchange with the community on or near Ham Hill and mark a range of social relationships between these communities. This may also be seen with communities further afield. For example, although the evidence from Maiden Castle, Dorset, suggests it used predominantly local, limestone source (Fig. 7.4.5; Wheeler 1943), the discovery of at least two 'exotic', Dolomitic conglomerate querns probably from the Mendips, in M-LIA contexts is notable. Could these also mark long distant contact and social relationships with communities to the north, perhaps even Cadbury itself, where Dolomitic querns are recorded?

The move towards diversity in quern provenance in the M-LIA may also be argued from the admittedly much more limited evidence of other sites in the region. At Croft Ambrey there appears to be a move towards more diverse sources in the later MIA (Fig. 7.4.6). The same might also be argued from the limited material from Mingies Ditch, with apparent growing diversity over the MIA (Fig. 7.4.5). Roe (*pers comm*) also suggests that LIA sites started to use Upper ORS as opposed to May Hill material for rotary querns, which may suggest a move by some sites away from 'traditional' sources.

What does such a shift represent? The evidence at Cadbury (and possibly elsewhere) may indicate social changes underway and the desire in the MIA to move away from purely local sources to more regional material. This may represent social developments and a move to wider social contacts and relationships with communities at greater distance than was previously the case in the EIA. This becomes far more convincing when compared to the growing reliance in the later Iron Age on regionally derived pottery alongside the existing long distance exchange of briquetage. By the mid-LIA there appears far more willingness by communities, from a range of settlement types, to obtain material from further afield rather than relying solely on local resources.

Returning to the Cadbury evidence, a second process emerges through the mid-LIA. By the LIA Beacon Hill, had come to dominate, with the diverse sources of the MIA no longer so widely exploited (Fig. 7.4.3). This seems to be a common theme across the region with specialised sources becoming of prime importance at possibly centralised quarries whose material was exported over long distance. In the north the reliance on May Hill appears to have begun early with Roe (1999a) suggesting May Hill sources were in use as early as the Neolithic on the Cotswolds (Roe 1999; *forthcoming b*). May Hill querns are also known from a number of LBA and EIA sites, for example Crickley Hill (P. Dixon *pers comm*), Hucclecote (Thomas et al 2003) and Shenberrow (Fell 1961) and even as far as Gravelly Guy (Roe 1995). The use of this source in the Iron Age may not be surprising therefore and cannot be regarded as purely a MIA phenomenon. However, by the by the mid-LIA most sites were relying at least in part, and some completely, on this source.

This picture of reliance on a single, non-local, source for quern stone is not restricted to the region. At Danebury, Peacock (1987) has suggested an increasing reliance on Lodsworth querns in the later periods and indicated a similar trend at Owlsbury in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC/AD. However, despite the assemblage from Danebury showing an increasing amount of Greensand (Lodsworth) stone in the later Iron Age (3rd/2nd century BC), proportionally the group from

ceramic phase 7 is similar to that in the cp 1-3, the EIA (5th/4th century BC) (Fig. 7.4.6). The large quantity of Lodsworth stone, however, correlates with the marked increase in use of rotary querns at Danebury in ceramic phase 7 and may reflect the similar pattern at Cadbury of focusing on regionally sourced stone for rotary querns<sup>105</sup>. This suggests that by the mid-LIA a number of areas of southern Britain, and in the study area in particular, had come to rely on specialised sources and, in some cases at least, the reliance on those sources appears to have matched the shift to rotary querns (cf. Morris 1996, 52). These quarries may have become specialists in the construction of rotary querns – a skill and industry that may have been somewhat more specialised and restricted than the local production of saddle querns. Rotary querns were also perhaps less able to be made from locally obtained erratics and needed higher quality stone.

The evidence suggests that Beacon Hill quarries continued throughout the Roman period and the construction of the Fosse way directly adjacent to the quarries may indicate the importance put on them in the early Roman period. The May Hill quarries are less certain. A general trend to imported Lava querns is seen on most Roman sites, although ORS sources are still used, but it appears that May Hill sources went out of use. Its continued use however in the Medieval period (Roe 1999) may suggest that, as with the Malvern potteries, there was some continuity although the prominent and focal role it had played in the Iron Age had perhaps diminished.

#### *7.4.3 Querns and social life*

The production of quern stones and their exchange should not be divorced from their treatment on site and specifically on deposition. Analysis of deposition may provide some clues to their role and importance of querns in everyday life of Iron Age communities and hence the importance in society of obtaining quern material.

The small number of querns with detailed contextual information and the generally poor character of publication make it virtually impossible to engage in statistically valid discussion of quern locations. However, where context has been recorded in the region (and near by) some clear trends emerge which may indicate the symbolic importance of querns.

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<sup>105</sup> Although, as argued for other material at Danebury, including pottery and briquetage there appears to have been increased deposition of all forms of artefacts in cp 6-8 compared to earlier phases (Morris 1994 etc).

Most of the querns that have been recovered appear to be related to houses – usually in house gullies or post holes associated with the house. This can be seen with the querns from the wall foundations at Conderton, the house gully at Beckford and from postholes at Witney. A hoard in a pit at the rear of a house at Mingies Ditch (Allen 1993, 79) included 1 large saddle quern, 2 loaf shaped querns and small elliptical quern. This hoard of quern stones (Fig. 7.4.7) is located in what appears to be a post-pit of a ‘back door’<sup>106</sup>. The querns appear to be deposited in relation both to an entrance and boundary location. The association of this hoard with the ‘rear’, south-west facing entrance, rather than the ‘normal’ south-east entrance, could also be claimed as important considering the symbolic associations with doorways (Parker-Pearson 1996; Oswald 1997). Allen (*ibid.*) claims this assemblage represents a “standard assemblage for a household”. However the large number of querns suggests this is unlikely for a single household use and does not fully explain its deposition together as a single unit. Instead a symbolic role may have been likely.

In addition to house gullies or postholes a common location for quern deposition is in enclosure boundaries. For example at Shenberrow Hillfort (Fell 1961) querns from the rampart boundary, one in particular apparently deposited on the old ground surface below the rampart, a similar pre-rampart example can be seen from Thornwell enclosure and from the enclosure ditch at Preston. Elsewhere, querns were commonly deposited in entrance-way paving, for example at Conderton, Cadbury Castle and Salmonsbury. Although in most cases this is explained as stone re-use (e.g. Bellamy 2000), in some cases, where stone is plentiful, as at Conderton, such an explanation may be only part of the story, with the re-use taking on greater significance. The ‘hoard’ of quern stones in the gate trench at Croft Ambrey may represent a similar but more dramatic example of this. Here nine querns were deposited in a central location in the entrance way (Fig. 7.4.7) to the gate of period V, many of them having been broken in to a number of other pieces but fitting together to form complete querns (Stanford 1974, 185). Within this hoard there is an apparent range of sources of material including different grits and sandstone.

The limited evidence suggests that quern deposition was also associated with boundary and entrance contexts. Hingley (1990; 2003) has suggested that the deposition of currency bars in boundary contexts on Iron Age sites indicates a symbolic role. The same may be true of querns, associating them with the liminality of settlement boundaries and with the entrances, possibly re-affirming their relation with process of transformation in crop processing. The association with boundaries as symbolic may become more explicit by the LIA. At Uley West

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<sup>106</sup> A feature notable on a number of Thames Valley houses such as that at Groundwell Farm. See Chapter 5.

Hill, not only is the presence of querns on a supposedly non-domestic site somewhat odd, a pit in the suggested 'temenos' ditch contained a quern stone associated with a cache of spear heads and LIA wheel thrown wares which the excavators claim as "ritually deposited" (Woodward and Leach 1993, 23). This association may indicate a direct ritual connotation by the LIA.

The distribution of the large assemblage at Glastonbury, however, appears to show little obvious patterning, although the lack of well defined context association makes it difficult to know what the distribution map in Coles and Minnit (1995, fig. 8.2) actually illustrates apart from general findspots as identified by Bulleid and St. George-Gray. No one area of the site appears to have an over abundance of querns and no clear association with the boundaries can be indicated although a number of examples are on the boundary edge of the site. It is impossible from such plans however to know the context in relation to house platforms and many appear to occur on the edge of platforms and could conceivably be associated with house boundaries or entrances.

In addition to the location and nature of quern deposition the state of the querns may also shed light on communities' perceptions of querns. Heslop's (1980) study of querns in Yorkshire indicated that many querns had been broken upon deposition and fragments deposited either together or in separate locations. Heslop notes that this is a difficult process unlikely to happen in use but marks a deliberate act. Similar processes appear to have been taking place in the region with a number of cases of fragments of querns being uncovered that have been shown to fit together, for example from the cache in the entrance at Croft Ambrey, from Dibble Farm, Conderton and Cadbury, amongst others. To what extent this represents a symbolic act or the reason for deposition and discard is unclear but Heslop's note that such breaking often appears to have been deliberate may suggest that querns were often destroyed and put out of use deliberately. The fact that broken querns were not reused as rubbers (Bellamy 2000) also suggests that some may have been deposited when still useful. Although the evidence is too limited to talk in terms of deliberate 'fragmentation' (Chapman 2000), it is potentially significant that querns were often intentionally deposited and their working lives ended when they were still of use.

The symbolic roles of querns and millstones are known from a range of ethnographic and archaeological contexts. An example from the Peasants revolt in medieval England although within a specific historic and political context may help to illustrate the social and symbolic importance of hand querns in many societies directly because of their essential role in agricultural life. In this example of the Peasants revolt the historical sources note that:

“The monastery parlour was paved with stone slabs whose origin was dear to the hearts of the people of St. Albans: they were the millstones which they themselves had formerly used when they were allowed, in spite of privileges accorded the abbey. After drawn out legal wrangle the monastery won the right to confiscate them. They were then placed in the parlour (as a floor) as a reminder of the wrong and ignominy they had shown the abbey”

In 1381 (with the Peasants revolt) “one group [of peasants] obtained entry to this parlour, prised up the stones, carried them outside, smashed them and *distributed the fragments among the rebels – this time as a souvenir of the defeat of the monastery*” (Reville 1981, 93)

What clearer example could be given of a rural society where the essential economic importance of querns led to them having a heavily socially imbued, symbolic role? It is instructive in this example that it is not purely the importance placed on hand querns as symbolic of economic independence but that when retrieved in the revolt they were smashed up and the fragments distributed. The quern stones then had retained a symbolism well beyond any practical use. Whilst this cannot be used as direct parallel for the Iron Age, the deposition process involved with querns may suggest that their importance in agricultural life also led to a symbolic resonance. Both in the location of their deposition, and potentially in treatment at the end of their ‘life’, they retained a symbolic resonance for the community. This supports suggestions elsewhere that querns were involved in structured and symbolic deposition (Heslop 1980; Hingley 1992; Hill 1995, 108) and supports the idea that the role of querns in the transformation of foodstuffs gave them particular symbolic importance. As Hill (1995, 108) states:

“It [their transforming role] imbued these activities with considerable symbolical and metaphorical importance and connected them with concerns of cosmology, mortality and social reproduction.”

Alongside the apparent symbolism and structured nature of the querns’ treatment upon deposition can be noted the complex processes of provenance and exchange. Again their importance in transforming food stuffs and in agricultural life may have imbued their exchange and provenance with similar strong symbolic and social aspects. The study of provenance indicates complex pattern of exchange – some of which cannot be explained in

purely functionalist terms. It is clear therefore that the functional use of these items cannot be divorced from other aspects of social and culture needs and as Cunliffe states:

“the manufacture and distribution [of querns]... would have required complex systems of control embedded within the social system” (Cunliffe 1991, 465).

Allied against the complex pattern of exchange of this material a picture of the importance of the querns in the social life of these communities emerges. It appears that querns had important roles beyond, but potentially intrinsically linked to, their essential role within the community. Querns, therefore, played an essential and symbolic role in converting food stuffs and it is perhaps little wonder that these objects, which in many cases needed to be acquired over distance, took on social and symbolic resonance which were reinforced within the community and ended in symbolic fragmentation and deposition of this material. If the material was deposited and used in symbolically significant ways then, rather than being seen as purely ‘utilitarian’ (e.g. Cumberpatch 1995), their provenance and production should be viewed in even more significant ways. There is an odd disparity, that the deposition of such material is viewed in often structured and symbolic ways yet the use, production, provenance and exchange of such items is usually viewed in purely economic or functionalist terms. It is important to combine depositional contexts with other aspects of the ‘life’ of artefacts (Chapman 2000). It is only through combining such evidence that the importance of such material to the community may become apparent.

#### *7.4.4 Discussion of correlation between Pottery and Quern sources*

The most striking aspect of pottery and quern exchange in the region is the correlation between regionalised pottery and quern sources. This occurs both in the north, at May Hill and the Malverns, and in the south at Beacon Hill, suggesting that similar exchange systems were taking place and/or that these locations had similar significance to those communities. There does not appear to be any obvious functional reason for the relationship. It seems more likely that for some reason these areas of the landscape had taken on a role as specialised areas for production of these materials. Why should this be the case? Jackson (1999b) suggested that the poor soils of the Malvern area explain why this area came to specialise in pottery production in the later Iron Age, potentially in exchange for food stuffs. However, this does not fully explain why communities throughout the region should adopt these wares from such specialised regional centres or why the process should have taken place at two different locations in the region.

A fundamental problem in any such discussion is our limited understanding of the nature of production. Jackson's explanation for the location of regional pottery centres relies on assuming that (1) communities lived in this area already and had to specialise because of poor agricultural potential and (2) that communities producing pottery (and querns, although he does not discuss them) were static and sedentary, exporting their wares elsewhere. However, we have no real understanding of how these materials were produced and it may have been that communities came from elsewhere to carry out these activities. One possible scenario is that, at certain times of year, communities travelled to these locations to undertake the production of querns and pottery. Such a scenario suggests that these areas of the landscape were potentially communal and were not directly controlled by any one community but were accessible to all. This could potentially relate to dramatic and possibly symbolic perception of landscape as areas distinct from all communities and perhaps even perceptually distinct from everyday life.

Alternatively, the area may have contained specialist communities who relied solely on production of these materials in exchange for other goods. Through the later Iron Age they came to diversify into centralised production of both pottery and querns at these two locations. A further possibility is that specialist communities moved in to these locations because of their existing social and symbolic importance to the wider community and this reflect the increasing dominance of the material from these sites in the later centuries BC.

If any control existed over these production areas, it is unclear how it was maintained or manifested. There is little evidence of a direct relationship between control over production and the quern, pottery or briquetage sources. At Droitwich, Woodwiss (1992) has noted the lack of evidence for high status settlement close to the brine springs, which might indicate control by particular communities or elites. The same is true of the Malvern potteries, May Hill and Beacon Hill. No obvious indication of control is evident and whilst hillforts do exist in relatively close proximity to these sites: Midsummer Hill is one of the nearest to May Hill and Maesbury, 2km from Beacon Hill, there is no evidence, as yet, to indicate they were controlling these production sites or that they themselves were high status. The lack of May Hill querns from Midsummer Hill also suggests little direct connection between them. Perhaps also notable is the lack of LIA sites, like that at Bagendon, to develop in proximity to these specialised production centres and one might imagine that if they were overtly controlled by elites in the LIA that high status sites would emerge close to them.

The only site where this might be the case is Weston-under-Penyard where the evidence indicates a complex of LIA sites with coinage and some imported pottery, which subsequently

developed into the Roman town of Ariconium (6.3; Jackson 2000). This appears to have developed out of metalwork production using the Forest of Dean Iron ores in the LIA, although, to what extent this represents direct control of this resource is unclear. The site's location, around 6km from May Hill, could also imply some control over the quern quarries although the sketchy quern evidence from the site (Saunders and Roe 2000, 144) suggests that like some other LIA sites (Bagendon, late IA at Beckford II) there was a move to the use of 'Forest of Dean' Upper ORS. In addition, Jackson (2000) has noted the apparent limited amount of 'Malvern' wares on the site in contrast to settlements on the other side of the Severn and has suggested this may indicate cultural or economic differences between this area and the east of the Severn.

The lack of direct evidence does not necessarily mean there was no control over these resources. It may be wrong to look for evidence of control through the existence of high status sites or hillforts as direct centres of control. The apparent symbolism of these landscape features may suggest that control existed but was less overt. If these locations had symbolic meaning to the communities around them or even ritual connotations then overt, direct control may not have been required. It has been suggested (Woodwiss 1992; Morris 1994) for the Droitwich brine springs, that the nature of these places may have imbued them with symbolic and even ritual significance which may have acted in creating taboos concerning access and the activities which could take place in those areas. The link between ritual and salt springs is well known in the Iron Age and Roman period; with for example the LIA and Roman temple at Fontaines Salinees, Burgundy (cf. Morris *forthcoming b*). The dramatic landscape features of the Malverns, May Hill and Beacon Hill may have had similar symbolic connotations which limited and controlled social access to them. It may only have been those 'specialists' with the required skills, who could access such areas, setting them apart from the rest of the community/communities (cf Hingley 1997).

An important factor in understanding the correlation between pottery and quern manufacture, therefore, may be the nature of the landscape from which the querns and pottery were being obtained. Both May Hill and Beacon Hill form impressive landscape features dominating their localities. May Hill is visible from some distance across the Severn valley and Cotswolds and is a prominent feature visibly close to the striking feature of the Malverns. The Malverns dominate the Severn valley and are highly visible from along the Cotswold ridge. Beacon Hill is also a prominent feature with the quarry located close to a number of (presumably) Bronze Age barrows which utilise this visible location on the highest point of the Mendip ridge. The Fosse Way also uses the location as a visible marker where the road kinks as it passes south over the Mendip ridge. In all cases, the choice of these locations as

visible points in the landscape may have influenced their choice as centres of production or entail that the material from them was more sought after. Roe's work suggests that May Hill in particular had a long history of use for quern stone which may suggest that this area already had an importance to communities in the Severn Valley and Cotswolds prior to the Iron Age. However, it was only by the MIA (probably after the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC) that Malvern wares were becoming an important element to communities in the region (although they too may have a longer history –see 6.3). In the case of May Hill and the Malverns therefore, production may already have existed but it seems that by the MIA these landscape features had taken on a more significant role. Arguably, this earlier role led, in the MIA, to a symbolic importance beyond an earlier functional role. This lengthy history may have begun to create a mythical importance to these landscape features beyond the purely functional or economic but need not have been discreet from them.

The nature of all these landscape features – as visible from some distance – may also have been important in their growing dominance. As the communities moved to regional sources they were situated in locations which for many of the communities, remained visible despite being set away from the community. It is often assumed, particularly in 'down-the-line' models of exchange that communities were unaware of the original sources of material or that it was regarded purely as non-local and/or 'exotic'. However, the visibility of the Malverns and May Hill meant that many of the sites obtaining these materials could see these locations and they may even have been conscious of them as the source of that material.

In order to test the idea that these sources were dominant visible features to the communities receiving these artefacts, 'viewsheds' were created using GIS to establish which areas of the landscape could see these features. This was done for the relationship between Malvern Hills and Malvern Group A and B1 pottery (7.4.10), May Hill and May Hill querns, Beacon Hill and Beacon Hill querns and Glastonbury G2 pottery<sup>107</sup>. In all instances there is an indication (see above) that the temper or stone for these materials derived from these locations. The results for the Malvern wares are most striking. The vast majority of sites with Malvern A and/or B1 can see the Malvern Hills. Those sites that cannot see the Malverns have small proportions of Malvern wares and/or are very late sites such as Cirencester (Roman town) and Bagendon which might suggest by this time the link between use and visibility of the source was not important and/or that these sites were not fully integrated in to these exchange networks. There is also an association between G2 wares and Beacon Hill querns is also clear, although reliant on a far smaller data set.

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<sup>107</sup> Not illustrated see Bruhn and Moore *forthcoming*.

This analysis enables a quantified examination of the role of phenomenological features. It indicates an apparently clear relationship between those sites receiving material from these locations and the visibility of the latter. This may have had the effect of both imbuing the artefacts with greater significance and vice-versa imbuing the landscape features with greater significance. The meaning of such features cannot be divorced from their functional roles, however, and the two may have fed back in to each other; their role as source of querns leading to a symbolic meaning and their symbolic meaning imbuing the quern stone with greater meaning than functional use alone.

However, whilst it is tempting to regard these locations as somehow symbolic areas of the landscape, unless we suggest that at some point (roughly contemporaneously) all these locations suddenly took on a greater 'ritual' significance, it still does not adequately explain the shift to such distinct source and shift by communities away from local production. In addition, many other sites receiving this material were situated in the Thames Valley and Cotswold dip slope and could not see these locations. Clearly the processes of exchange were more complex than simple reference to 'symbolic' landscape features. In order to explain this shift we need to examine more closely the processes of exchange in the period, and how these may have changed, and the relationship between exchange, social relationships and community identity.

## **7.5 Metalwork**

### ***7.5.1. Type of Sites with metalworking evidence (Appendix 9)***

A wide range of sites show evidence of smithing or repair waste indicating that there appears to have been no distinction on what type of sites metalworking took place, with site based metalworking taking place on both early and MIA settlements (Appendix 9; Morris 1996, 55). This localized manufacture of metal objects appears somewhat at odds with the move towards regional production centres for a range of other materials but the evidence from currency bars and the limited smelting sites may suggest that the production of iron was specialized (and centralised?) whilst smithing was undertaken locally, reflecting observations elsewhere in southern Britain (e.g. Sharples 1991b, 302).

The region is crucial in having one of the major iron ore sources in Britain in the Forest of Dean and a secondary source in the Bristol-Mendip area (Ehrenreich 1994, 16). In the Forest of Dean there is evidence of a number of pre-Roman iron works, most convincingly from

Weston-under-Penyard (Ariconium). The enclosures at site B, for example, have been reinterpreted as potentially specialist LIA iron working sites (Jackson 2000) rather than as Roman military camps (Walters and Walters 1989) and there appears to be evidence of pre-Roman settlement with iron working beneath the Roman town and elsewhere in the vicinity (see Fig. 7.5.1). In addition to the evidence from around Weston, a number of sites have yielded possible evidence of pre-Roman smelting, at Symond's Yat, Coleford, Monmouth and Ruardean (Walter and Walters 1989, 39). The extent to which these were exploited in the Iron Age is uncertain and based primarily their importance in the Roman period (Walters 1992). None are the result of modern excavations and no recently excavated Roman iron works have produced Iron Age evidence (e.g. Barber and Holbrook 2000). What limited evidence there is for Iron Age activity appears to indicate they are of 1<sup>st</sup> century AD date possibly suggesting that iron production saw an increase in the latest Iron Age and early Roman period. The location of the Coleford warrior burial (Webster 1989; Hunter 2003), dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, in an area of large scale iron working may be associated with power and control over such production leading to high status individuals. Alternatively, the presence of Roman material culture on such sites may make these sites more visible in comparison with more ephemeral early and MIA metalworking sites.

One of the notable features of the list of sites with metalworking is the number of Mendips cave sites, including Wookey Hole, Rowberrow, Chelm's combe and possibly both iron and bronze working at Saye's Hole. This association of caves with metalworking coincides with the observation that they mark one of the find spots for currency bars, with finds from Wookey Hole and Reads Cavern in the Mendips (Hingley forthcoming). The deposition of large hoards of currency bars in rock crevices in the Malverns (Hingley 1990; forthcoming) may also mark a practice with similar symbolic connotations. Hingley suggests the deposition of such items in these 'natural places' as a ritual act, possibly symbolizing the liminality of these locations, although he accepts that that the Mendip examples may also be evidence of iron working in caves (Hingley forthcoming). Combined with the evidence from the other cave sites it seems that caves had a particular role in metal production. The association of these places as somehow special and liminal (possibly also evidenced by burials in caves; 5.7) need not be divorced from a functional role as smelting and smithing sites. Metalworking in caves may indicate that ironsmiths were regarded as distinct from the rest of the community. These specialists may have located themselves in areas of the landscape, which were already regarded as liminal or ritually significant locations, to mark out the act of transformation of metals, a situation, which has been argued, took place on the smaller scale by ironworkers situating themselves on the peripheries of settlement enclosures (Hingley 1997).

The range of sites with evidence of copper or bronze working, usually in the form of crucibles, suggests that bronze working was also carried out on a range of sites, including enclosures, such as Eckweek, Beckford and Ermin Farm as well as Hillforts, such as Bredon, Uley, Midsummer and Conderton, with no apparent distinction between site type. As with iron smithing the evidence suggests that in many cases local communities often conducted the manufacture of objects and that there was little control over the bronze working process. However, there may have been an increase in metalworking in the later Iron Age, as exhibited at Frocester which shows major bronze working in the LIA (c. 1<sup>st</sup> c BC/AD; Foster 2000, 89) in addition to iron working, which reflects the amount of metalworking at Ditches and Bagendon and may relate to the increase in material culture, such as brooches and other personal items, from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC onwards (see Hill 1997). Glastonbury also appears to represent a site with intensive bronze working, supporting its role as a production centre for larger than the immediate settlement (Sharples 1991b, 301).

### ***7.5.2 Location of metalworking***

A number of previous studies have stressed the location of iron working on the edge of sites or association with entrances (Henderson 1992; Hingley 1997, 12). This has been interpreted as marking its association with liminal locations, possibly as a result of its symbolic importance in transformation processes (Hingley 1997; 2003). Evidence from the study area may support this with a number of enclosed sites showing evidence of metalworking on the periphery. However, these are also the areas that have been the focus of excavation and this pattern, at least on some sites, may be a product of excavation strategies rather than an archaeological distribution. For example, the majority of iron working slag from Midsummer Hill derives from the southern entrance (Stanford 1981, 137) with evidence also from the entrance at Llanmelin and Conderton, the huts on the edge of the site at Sudbrook. At Cradley [653] metalworking took place within the silting up ditch (T. Hoverd *pers comm*). At Ditches, iron and bronze working debris came from specific contexts around the inner enclosure entrance and inner enclosure ditch. These deposits could be regarded as deliberate deposition on the periphery of the site with particular attention to the ditch terminals, and the groups of material present in both the north and south ditch terminals, include an array of both iron and Bronze-working debris might be regarded as a deliberate, structured deposit. Alternatively, the close association of bronze and iron working debris (also seen in Trench B) may indicate a close relationship between these industries. However, without fuller investigation of the interior of the site it is difficult to establish if this is unusual. The evidence from the related LIA site at Bagendon also suggests that the industrial area of the site was located at the entrance and possibly peripheral to other activity areas and as such appears to reflect

continental 'oppida' (e.g. Mont Beuvray) in having industrial areas close to the entrance. Again, however, the focus of excavation on this area (Clifford 1961; Trow 1982) means it is difficult to be certain what other activities took place in the 'interior' if any.

There appears to be no clear differences in the location of bronze and iron working. Direct evidence of the site of bronze working (rather than in the form of discarded crucibles) is seen only at a few sites, such as the bronze working hut at Bredon (see Fig. 7.5.2) and the working area at Conderton both of which indicate a similar marginality and association with the entrance to the site.

Evidence from other sites where sufficient excavation of the interior has taken place is little help in indicating whether metalworking was restricted to certain areas. At Kingsdown, slag waste was relatively evenly distributed throughout the inner ditch (St. George-Gray 1930). At Glastonbury (Coles and Minnit 1995, 137) the metalworking debris is focused on a number of locations suggesting that certain houses or areas of the site specialized in metalworking but none appear to be necessarily on the periphery of the site. Not all metalworking evidence should necessarily be taken to indicate liminality, and the association with ditches and entrance-ways may be as much a product of the focus on such features, especially by earlier excavations.

### *Other metals*

Lead working is known from early Roman contexts at Charterhouse (Todd 1993, 63) with a lead ingot stamped with the date of AD 49, indicating the early exploitation of the leadmines in the area by the Roman administration, but although evidence of apparent pre-Roman lead working has come from the LIA enclosure at Charterhouse (Todd 1993; 1995) there is little information to establish its extent or nature. Other evidence of lead working in the Iron Age is less abundant. Lead ore and working waste at Meare West (St. George-Gray and Bulleid 1953, 251) suggests it was being worked there, presumably from an ore state; similar evidence comes from at Glastonbury (Coles and Minnit 1995, 141) and possibly Sudbrook (Nash-Williams 1939, 50)<sup>108</sup>. If the limited evidence for settlement associated with lead working in the Charterhouse area reflects a real picture, then explanation is required as to why the material was transported to the Lake Villages to be worked rather than worked locally. It would seem to add to the impression that the Lake Villages represented specialized production and exchanges centres. Closer dating of Charterhouse might indicate to what

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<sup>108</sup> At Sudbrook it is probably in a mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD context.

extent production transferred closer Mendip sources in the LIA, after the abandonment of Glastonbury around the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC. If such a transfer occurred it might shed light on changes in control and production of material in the latest Iron Age.

### 7.5.3 Currency bars (fig. 6.3.2.1)

Much recent research has been undertaken on the circulation, deposition and role of currency bars in later Iron Age society (Hingley 1990c; *forthcoming*). It is pertinent that the study area contains 30% of all sites in Britain that have produced currency bars<sup>109</sup>, with a number of others, such as at Cadbury and Barford, just beyond the study area. An addition to Hingley's (*forthcoming*) updated corpus, has been found at Hucclecote, apparently associated with animal bones and boars tusks (Sermon 1998). Although little is known about the context of these finds they may be related to the later Iron Age settlements in the vicinity.

Despite the regional concentration of currency bars there is a notable absence of them in vicinity of the Iron ore producers; the Forest of Dean, possibly suggesting they were transported to those areas without iron sources. Hingley (*forthcoming*) also cautions that the focus of deposition in the area is the product of differential deposition practices in southern Britain. There were certainly varied processes at work in the deposition of metal artefacts which appear to have varied across the region (see Ch.7) but the high concentration of currency bars is not apparently matched by a high deposition of other metal artefacts and may indicate, as Hingley suggests (1990c; *forthcoming*), that particular rules governed their deposition. As such, currency bars may be a somewhat misleading guide to the exchange of metal and more accurately reflect varying deposition processes.

### 7.5.4 Discussion

The evidence from Bagendon, Ditches and potentially Weston-under-Penyard and Sudbrook suggests that one of the primary functions of these LIA sites was an industrial one; as production centres for iron and bronze objects and, for the former at least, as coin mints. If the evidence from the Lake Villages indicates they performed similar roles as specialist production centres (Sharples 1991b) it may further indicate the similarities between such sites as peripherally located production centres. Exactly who and what communities were receiving this material is uncertain. Whilst St. George-Gray and Bullied (1953) have suggested

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<sup>109</sup> Based on Hingley's (*forthcoming*) corpus.

manufacture on a scale for the community, Sharples (1991b) suggests a more dynamic role as exchange (and possibly production) centres, located on the margins of larger social groups.

It is unclear to what extent metalworking became specialised or centralised in the later Iron Age. Evidence from a range of MIA sites suggests that most sites practiced iron smithing and many have evidence of Bronze working. In the LIA, enclosures, such as Frocester, appear to have been involved in relatively large scale bronze and iron working (Foster 1999) in addition to that seen at Bagendon and Ditches which may reflect an intensification in metal production in the LIA claimed elsewhere in southern Britain (Sharples 1991b, 302). Smelting appears to have been more specialized and limited to a few sites (Ehrenreich 1994) possibly indicating closer control over the smelting of objects in contrast to smithing. In most instances smelting appears to be associated with larger enclosures/hillforts which could be argued as indicating control by larger or higher status sites such as Midsummer Hill, Sudbrook, Ditches and Bagendon. The only other possible evidence for high status control over iron smelting might be the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD warrior burial at Coleford (Webster 1989), which could be argued as indicating status perhaps through control of local production. However, the evidence of smelting at cave sites suggests an interesting conceptual role for the location and process of smelting between such locations. In such instance, as with production of briquetage, pottery and querns, control and restricted access to the smelting process may have been maintained by its location in special and restricted areas of the landscape.

Hingley (*forthcoming*, 18) has also suggested that the standardisation of currency bars indicates a high degree of control over production and distribution but it is unclear who or where groups that were controlling such production were located. If Hingley is correct, the standard dating for currency bars prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC would suggest specialist iron manufacture in the later Iron Age which would concur with the potentially specialist manufacture of pottery, querns and salt. It may be that, as with quern and pottery production (see 6.3, 6.4), the groups engaged in making currency bars, smelting and ore mining were not situated in particular settlements but may have been relatively mobile in 'production' areas.

## **7.6 Agricultural production and exchange**

Agricultural produce is rarely discussed in terms of its role in exchange systems in Iron Age studies. In the region in particular this may partly be due to the belief that early and MIA agriculture was based on the Germanic mode of production (Hingley 1984; Hill 1995) with communities (in the main) the sole producers and consumers of their agricultural produce. In

recent years, however, a number of studies of Iron Age crop assemblages have indicated that more complex processes of production and consumption may have been undertaken (e.g. Van der Veen 1992; Jones 1996). With the evidence that increasing numbers of communities in the later Iron Age were using long distance sources to obtain the majority of their domestic materials. If we assume exchange was reciprocal, for those communities not producing specialist goods it may have been labour or agricultural produce that was exchanged.

Examination of the settlement organization and landscapes studies in chapter 4 and 5 suggests that to envisage Iron Age communities within the study area as isolated communities engaged in an entirely self-sufficient mode of production, may be too simplistic and that interaction and co-operation in a variety of forms and scales may have existed. The existence of enclosures within larger field systems and landscapes and the clustering of enclosures may suggest co-operation over land rights, agricultural requirements and greater degree of social interaction. In addition, the distribution of pottery, querns and salt indicates exchange between adjoining communities on a wider scale.

The nature of co-operation in farming systems and possibility of the exchange of livestock or crops is less clear. Ethnographic studies suggest that co-operation and reciprocity in pre-industrial farming communities was a common feature of pre-industrial farming and that some visions of the 'Germanic mode of production' may be overly simplistic (see Hingley 1999, 244). Recent study of crop assemblages from the upper Thames Valley provides some evidence to indicate that crops were involved in processes of exchange. Stevens (1996, 253) has indicated that the grain assemblage from the Rollright enclosure, situated on the Cotswolds, includes weeds from low-lying wetland locations. Rollright is especially useful in being similar in form and function to the (household sized?) enclosures on the Cotswolds in the study area. Stevens proposes a number of possible explanations for this: (1) that the site was engaged with co-operation with sites in lower lying locations or (2) that grain material was exchanged from these areas. He suggests that the nature of the assemblage at Rollright indicates that crop processing had been undertaken to a late stage, before storage, indicating that the material had either been exchanged or possibly that a number of sites had co-operated in processing beyond the means available at the household level.

Considering the nature of Rollright, with possibly only a single roundhouse (Lambrick 1988)<sup>110</sup>, co-operation seems the best explanation for the nature of the assemblage. This adds to the impression gained from the analysis of settlement patterning on the Cotswolds, that

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<sup>110</sup> Although this may be due to only limited excavation at the site (Richard Hingley pers comm.).

rather than enclosures being isolated, they were engaged in either (or both) co-operation with other communities in processing, or the exchange of grain with other settlements, some of which would appear to be situated in low lying areas. In the case of Rollright, presumably in the Windrush or Thames valley. The social implications of Stevens' study are widespread. The evidence from Rollright may indicate crop-processing between a range of communities at central sites such as Hillforts (Stevens 1996, 250). An alternative possibility is that it took place in off-site locations, perhaps on the boundaries of social groups, areas that are unlikely to be detected archaeologically. In either case, the model of isolated enclosures appears increasingly flawed and there may have been greater co-operation (or exchange) of agricultural goods between settlements on the uplands, as well as potentially greater contact with communities in the Thames valley.

Unfortunately, there has been insufficient study as yet on assemblages from the study area itself to expand this picture. Evidence from the EIA/MIA site at Bourton-on-the-Water also indicates that crops grown on damper soils were imported to the site (Stevens 1998). This material may also derive from somewhere in the Thames valley and may represent a similar pattern to that seen at Rollright. Stevens' (1996; 1998) initial studies, therefore, appears to suggest greater complexity in crop processing and exchange than previous models have envisaged and supports other material culture in emphasising the complex and extensive economic and social relationships between communities in the Cotswolds and upper Thames valley.

The storage pits at some of the Cotswold enclosures could be argued as providing supporting evidence of co-operation. Marshall (1984; 2001) has noted that the enclosures at The Bowsings and Lower Barn have a single storage pit providing for the community. Whilst he interprets this as agricultural production for the household community, evidence of such a pit could equally mark the community's store from a wider resource, as suggested by the evidence from Rollright. The evidence from storage pits is not simple, however, with Guiting Power (Saville 1979) containing a range of similar pits beyond the enclosure, which may imply a larger community or greater longevity at the site.

The only other sites where the importation of crops might be implied are those in areas where arable farming was impossible. These include the Somerset Lake Villages, Hallen in the Avon levels and Goldcliff in the Gwent levels. At Hallen and Goldcliff the evidence for arable crops is minimal (Gardiner *et al* 2002; Bell *et al* 2000). Either the community was entirely reliant on (local?) animal produce or such evidence is lacking due to depositional processes. At Glastonbury and Meare quern evidence (7.4) suggests crop processing was taking place on

site, presumably of crops brought in from the uplands. It is difficult to ascertain what such import signifies; did it come from other communities in return for the material apparently produced at Glastonbury, such as glass beads and metalwork (Sharples 1991b) or did related communities exist on the uplands? At Hallen, Meare and Goldcliff (Bell *et al* 2000) the suggestion is that these sites may have been short lived and were potentially even seasonal. It is possible that sections or all of such communities occupied other areas of the landscape at other times to produce crops. The problem with such a model is that it seems unlikely that all the community would occupy other areas in the summer, the best time for grazing the Gwent and Avon levels.

The evidence for exchange of livestock is even more limited but this must also be regarded as a potential important element of exchange systems. Some sites have been suggested as having a primary pastoral role, particularly those in the Thames Valley, such as Thornhill (Hey and Palmer 1989), and they may have exchanged some livestock or other resources.

### ***Discussion***

The evidence for co-operation and exchange in farming is only in its initial stages. However, combined with the analysis of settlement patterns, Stevens' work in the upper Thames Valley in particular provides growing evidence to support the suggestion that regarding all Iron Age enclosure communities as socially or economically independent from each other is flawed. It provides further evidence to suggest that relationships between communities were far more complex than previously envisaged and that co-operation in farming practices may have existed, reflecting perhaps ethnographic examples of similar communities.

### **7.7 Glass beads**

Guido (1978) identified three main production centres for glass beads in Britain; two of which fall within the study area at Glastonbury and Meare West, to which can be added Meare East (Henderson 1987). Meare has been claimed as producing "unparalleled evidence in Europe for glass bead manufacture" (Henderson 1987; 1995, 155). The only other potential evidence for pre-Roman glass making from the region comes from Sudbrook where Nash-Williams (1939, 50) mentions "glass slag" from the floors of huts 1 and 2, associated with iron working residue in an apparently early-mid 1<sup>st</sup> century AD context, potentially indicating glass manufacture.

Henderson (1991) suggests that a change took place in the manufacture of glass beads at Glastonbury indicating more centralization of their manufacture at oppida in Europe and at Glastonbury in western Britain. Henderson stressed that the production of glass may well have had ritual significance and that variation of design and colour in glass beads was socially significant. If correct, again the landscape context of such processes appears significant. The situation of Meare and Glastonbury as distinct from other communities; only accessible by boat through the wetlands may have reinforced the production of these items as special and separate from the rest of society.

The glass making evidence is consistent with that seen for other aspects of material culture, apparently indicating industrial specialization of certain communities, particularly those situated in marginal or specific areas of the landscape. The indication that on the continent glass bead manufacture appears to have been focused primarily at 'oppida', possibly infers that both the Lake Villages and Oppida had similar functions as production and exchange centres.

## **7.8. Re-engaging the social aspects of Artefact exchange**

### ***7.8.1 Problems with existing exchange models***

Previous studies of the regional exchange patterns have used down-the-line-exchange models as the main explanation for distributions (Morris 1985; 1994). This regards exchange as the product of piecemeal exchange by communities between each other with a gradual drop-off in material with distance from source. Morris (1994) showed through regression analysis that Malvern pottery in particular appeared to fit such a model. However, there are limitations with these existing models for exchange.

Firstly, down-the-line exchange, does not explain why central production locations, for pottery and querns, became dominant over the later Iron Age and why in particular there was a shift from local to regional sources for pottery. Current models regard this shift as related purely to perceived functional benefits of the material without explaining why these functional properties were not recognised earlier or the growing move to regional material over the later Iron Age. In addition, they see a perhaps imagined division between the functional qualities of certain material and the social and symbolic importance of the material and the processes of exchange itself.

Recent analyses also do not adequately discuss the processes of exchange; how and why communities exchange material, why distribution patterns fall away or end. It is clear from the distribution patterns of the Malvern wares (cf. Peacock 1968; Morris 1994; Fig 7.3.1/2), querns (Fig. 7.4.1) and briquetage (Fig. 7.1.1; Morris 1985; Matthews 1999), that these materials can not always be seen purely as falling off, in distribution and quantity, with distance from source and appear to have more complex distribution patterns. Although cultural factors have long been recognized as partly explaining such variation (e.g. Peacock 1968), the nature of such 'cultural' choices and their role in the process of exchange has seldom been explicitly discussed.

The implications for the occurrence of a similar range of artefacts appearing on the same site has also been largely ignored, yet it has wide implications for the process of exchange. Does this imply, for example, itinerant traders bringing a range of artefacts to these communities or that the exchange of these material utilized the same 'trade' routes. If so did specialist traders and specific trade routes exist, utilizing rivers or other routes? Such questions over the processes of exchange are poorly understood despite their potential implications for examining how communities related to each other. One of the reasons for ignoring such questions is the widely held assumption that exchange of these materials operated on a quasi-capitalist basis, similar to that envisaged in Medieval contexts (e.g. Piggott 1958; Peacock 1968; Roe 1995). However, such assumptions ignore a wider awareness of the potential social and symbolic nature of trade and exchange in pre-industrialist societies (Hodder 1982; Saitta 2002; Le Blanc 2002).

Previous discussions have also tended to discuss each of these materials in isolation and regard their exchange as independent from one another. Examination of the material culture above, however, suggests this ignores potential inter-relations between the production and exchange of these materials. Certain areas of the regional landscape appear to have been foci of 'industrial' activity. In the north, the area around the Malverns, May Hill and Forest of Dean was focused on production of pottery, quern stones and iron smelting. In the south Beacon Hill appears to have been a foci for pottery and quern production, whilst the Mendips in general were a source of other querns and pottery forms (e.g. Glastonbury Group 3). The Mendip caves were also a focus for iron working and the Charterhouse area lead producer. In addition, it appears in many cases that pottery, querns and briquetage occur on the same sites and may indicate that these material were traded together. This indicates a number of possibilities: that the same groups or communities in these areas were engaged in more than one manufacturing activity and/or that certain areas of the landscape were designated for

particular roles, either because the raw materials were located there or because they were isolated from the rest of the community or a combination of both.

To understand the changes seen in exchange patterns over the later Iron Age in the region we need to examine in more detail how exchange took place and what exchange may have meant to the communities involved. The evidence from pottery, querns, briquetage, glass beads and other materials suggest increased specialization over the later Iron Age which Henderson (1991, 135) has regarded as marking something of an industrial revolution. Although evidence from the Severn-Cotswolds indicates a perhaps more gradual shift to centralized and specialised production than Henderson, the general pattern appears consistent. However, we still need to explain *why* communities felt the need to move away from localized production, which appears to have served them sufficiently well in the earlier Iron Age, an aspect seldom focused on in previous discussions (e.g. Henderson 1991; Morris 1996).

### *7.8.2 The importance of the Severn River in exchange*

A number of recent studies have suggested the importance of both river transport (Sherratt 1996) and sea travel (Matthews 1999; Cunliffe 2001) in later prehistoric exchange systems. The region is dominated by the Severn river and estuary which has been regarded as facilitator of links across the Severn, between Wales, Somerset, and the south west and west Midlands in both prehistoric (Matthews 1999) and historic times.

The potential importance of the Severn can be suggested from a range of artefacts. There are a number of Glastonbury ware vessels beyond their 'normal' distribution at sites along the Severn (Fig. 7.3.3/7.3.5), as well as Durotrigan style pottery (e.g. Frocester) and the distribution of Droitwich and Cheshire briquetage also appears related to the Severn (Fig. 7.1.1). The river's role in pottery exchange in the later Iron Age can be compared with the exchange of the medieval Devon and Malvern wares (Fig. 7.8.1), perhaps suggesting the Severn played an important role linking communities along the Bristol Channel (and beyond) in prehistoric and historic times.

LIA coinage also indicates the rivers played an important part in exchange and contact. Exotic (i.e. non-Dobunnic) coins are not widespread in the region, in keeping with western Britain as a whole (De Jersey 1999), although the region has a significant number of Armorican coins (Fig. 7.8.2; De Jersey 1997). Where 'exotic' coins occur, they appear to be associated with rivers, especially the Severn, as with the Corisolite coin from Frampton Mansell (RCHME 1976; De Jersey 1997), the Durotrigan coin from Birdlip (Parry 1998) and the few Massiliote

coins (De Jersey 1999, 199). The location of these non-western, particularly Armorican coins, appears to indicate they came as a result of exchanges taking place along the River Severn. The Aust figurine, suggested as being from Iberia (British Museum 1925), also suggested a connection with exchange along the Severn, perhaps as part of wider Atlantic coast exchange (Cunliffe 2001), but the origin of the piece is now in doubt. Matthews (1999) uses such evidence to imply exchange by specialist traders. Alternatively it may represent a form of down-the-line exchange from communities, such as those at Glastonbury, tied in to wider exchange systems. The distribution of some glass bead types also supports the concept of the Severn estuary as an exchange route. The earlier types of imported beads, such as Guido's Class 1, 'Arras beads' are concentrated in East Yorkshire and the south west, particularly the Severn Estuary (Guido 1978, 46). The occurrence of these examples in the Severn Estuary area and at Meare may indicate the importation of these into Britain via sea trade up the Bristol channel and may have been part of the wider trade network outlined by Matthews (1999) and Sherratt (1996), despite Guido's claim that it indicates trade through southern England.

The realization that rivers were a prime access for exchange has been useful in moving away from the long held belief of the Jurassic ridgeway as a mode of contact and exchange (e.g. Hencken 1938; Guido 1978; Van Arsdell 1994), for which there remains little convincing evidence. However, there has been little discussion of the wider implications of the prime role of the Severn and other major waterways in the region. Does, for example, the evidence from the region continue to infer down-the-line exchange by communities associated with the rivers or do the rivers and river valleys mark existing and convenient route-ways across country? Alternatively, as might be imagined in Matthews' (1999; cf. Cunliffe 2001; Henderson *forthcoming*) model, did specialist, boatmen traders exist? The latter would imply a far more organized and specialist process for exchange, one more akin to Roman or Medieval proto-capitalist trade, rather than a process of localized community exchange.

If rivers, either as direct modes of transport (Severn?) or as route ways (Avon, Thames, Windrush, Churn?), were important, it may explain the location of some LIA production/exchange sites, for example Bagendon, Salmonsbury and Sudbrook. To these might be added sites further east at Dyke Hills and Abingdon. The location of these sites matches well the idea of trade along the major arterial rivers such as Thames and Severn (Sherratt 1996). However, there is a danger of circular argument in reinforcing the concept of these as trade centres on their location close to rivers and route ways and using these locations to explain their function. Despite the deposition of material at Bagendon and Salmonsbury

consistent with long distance exchange, neither this or the limited evidence from Sudbrook, Dyke Hill and Abingdon can be used to confirm they were LIA emporia.

### *7.8.3 Exchange and identity*

The development of the 'down the line exchange' model to explain the distribution of artefacts reacted primarily to an equation between material culture patterning (and exchange) and cultural or ethnic identity. In such culture historical approaches the existence of material culture seen on site was taken to regard affiliation to a cultural or ethnic unit. Within the study area, this continued to be argued at some level with Cunliffe's (1982; 1991) assertion that the differences between Malvern pottery in the north and Glastonbury wares in the south might be an early reflection of the latter division in the Dobunni, apparent in the coinage. Implicitly, pottery was regarded as a cultural marker. The dangers in such a correlation between material culture and ethnicity have been widely addressed, with Jones (1996) and others (Hodder 1982) indicating the extent to which ethnic and social identities are complex and multi-faceted and cannot be correlated to single artefacts. Each individual and communal identity is based on various levels and can be engaged in different situations, different contexts and in different ways. Thus no simple correlation exists between artefact use and a single monolithic cultural identity. Such a realisation is now axiomatic in archaeological theory. However, as Hodder (1982) and others noted this does not mean that the use and exchange of material is not embodied within social as well as functional relations. The trade, production, adoption and use, in different places, ways and scales, is one inherently bound in reshaping social relations between groups and in structuring new social forms. If this was the case then, the exchange, production and use of many of these regionally exchanged material was not solely an aspect of functionalist need or best trade routes. Instead it may be important to regard these processes in a variety of ways, related to social activities between and within communities. In reacting against the cultural historical approach to material culture and exchange, the down-the-line-models and market models of Peacock and Morris have tended to underplay the social implications that the physical process of exchange entails. Exchange by its very nature, is a process of interaction, either between communities, through intermediaries or by the use of certain exchange centres. Although the process of exchange may vary, in almost all cases exchange carries with it other aspects of social interaction and relationships.

In some cases the social processes involved in exchange may have been more important than the 'trade' itself. Ethnographic examples of long distance exchange network, such as the Yanomamo of the American south west, indicate the role of exchange in forming and maintaining social relationships. Thus as Le Blanc notes:

“The main goal of trade in some situations could have been to cement relationships between groups and the goods would thus have been a secondary benefit” (Le Blanc 2000, 55).

Cumberpatch (1995, 82) also notes in his study of exchange in Iron Age eastern Europe that:

“the exchange of utilitarian goods and food is an important and in some senses primary field of discourse closely involved in the reproduction of social practices and social formation”

In both cases, exchange leads to social interaction between groups and is used as an essential mode of creating, maintaining and manipulating relationships between communities. Much of the material identifiable in the region as the product of long distance exchange, may indicate similar practices. The quern evidence in particular appears to fit in to such a pattern. The Ham Hill stone present at middle Cadbury, for example, may not have had any greater functional benefit but instead its existence on the site may imply a socio-political relationship between hillfort communities, cemented by the exchange of such material. Much of the material identified on Iron Age sites in the Severn-Cotswolds, including the long distance exchange querns, pottery, briquetage and metalwork may have been part of social relationships; forming alliances as much as a trade in the items themselves.

It is more difficult to establish the social relationships implied by such material. One of the greatest problems is to see a lack of chronological depth in such material and identify the significance of one or two ‘exotic’ querns. In some cases such artefacts might be the result of short term relationships, such as a marriage between community members with querns, for example, as part of dowries or material brought with the marriage partner or retainers. Even the marriage itself could have been a form of exchange regarded in similar ways to the exchange of materials.

In such models the existence of material such as querns and pottery do not necessarily imply larger social groups, as seen in Cunliffe’s discussion of pottery in the region (1991). Instead they may indicate relationships; periods of exchange and interaction. In some cases these may have been short-lived events, even one-offs. Such instances may explain the occasional ‘exotica’ at some sites; for instance the existence of just three sherds of Malvern ware at Groundwell Farm, the Mendip Dolomitic querns at Maiden Castle (Dorset), and Dorset briquetage from Bourton. These may have been short lived contacts with communities closer

to the source of these material or events such as temporary alliances, marriages or reparations after conflict. Such a model moves away from the down-the-line-exchange model of seeing distance from source as paramount in the existence of material on site but accepts the role of human interaction in exchanging material and that the material often had greater significance.

Other distributions, however, such as the wide and significant distribution of the various Malvern wares, through presumably relatively frequent periods of exchange between communities may have created more intimate and long lasting social bonds. Not all exchange is, however, likely to have been undertaken through the same process or same rules and the same artefacts could even have been exchanged in different ways. In different contexts the existence of the same artefacts may indicate very different social and economic relationships. For example, Malvern wares in the Severn valley and Cotswolds may have been given with full knowledge of their source and exchanged between communities on a far more regular basis marking closer and frequently re-affirmed social ties whilst in other cases it indicates more occasional contact. It is difficult to assess the extent such ties can be quantified on the amount of material present on a site and there is always the danger of returning to a cultural historical approach with only a certain percentage of material seen as marking inclusion in a social or economic community<sup>111</sup>.

However, the existence of similar ranges of artefacts; including querns, pottery and briquetage on sites in the lower Severn valley and Cotswolds is surely significant in identifying the social, economic and cultural environment in which these communities existed. If such artefacts can be regarded as signifying exchange and the process of exchange can be regarded as marking social interactions, then these communities would appear to have engaged in a wider community of exchange. Without implying the existence of a static corporate group or larger ethnic identity, it should be considered that such interactions over the later Iron Age formed a strong socio-economic set of relations in to which communities were to a greater or lesser degree integrated.

In all cases, the actions of economic need and requirement cannot be divorced from the social implications of the exchange, or the relation between the obtaining of these materials and their association with potentially symbolic places in the landscape. It is clear from the region that, as elsewhere in later prehistory, the economic, social and symbolic are intrinsically linked (e.g. Cumberpatch 1995; Bruck and Goodman 1999, 10; Hingley *forthcoming*). There

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<sup>111</sup> This is a danger that coin distribution has suffered: creating a defined limit of which coins are significant enough and draw a line around them then used to suggest inclusion in a tribal entity (e.g. Sellwood 1984; Van Arsdell 1996).

may have been different processes in different circumstances and potentially in some cases for different materials. At times the exchange of some materials was inherently linked and imbued with a range of social, political and symbolic meanings. This is not to suggest that increased social interaction (through exchange) led necessarily to cultural similarity and the creation of larger cultural units, as has been suggested by Plog (1976). However, it suggests that social interaction between communities through exchange will lead to growing relationships based often on mutual economic reliance and/or benefit, through increased contact. Such contacts and exchanges were not limited to the exchange of materials but also negotiations over the landscape: the field systems, the enclosures, the sense of place of the community and in its relations with its neighbours. Analysis of the landscapes in the region, particularly the Severn valley and Cotswolds shows the importance of landscape and settlement boundaries in the later Iron Age and the construction, maintenance of these may well have played a part in negotiations and exchange (cf. Wigley *forthcoming b*). A generalized picture of the kind of exchanges taking place by individual communities and relationships fostered through them can be seen in Figure 7.8.3. This model suggests far more integrated, socially dynamic communities than many models of Iron Age societies, both in the region and beyond, have suggested.

Using the example of the Yanomamo again, such exchange need not be a process of reciprocity. Acceptance of this is crucial in understanding the possible relationships of these communities. One problem with the existence of specialist producers is the question of what is being returned in exchange for this material. This has often been argued as food stuffs (e.g. Jackson 1999b), whose absence can be explained archaeologically. However, as the Yanomamo example shows it may well have been the exchange that was important with these communities as much, if not more, than the materials themselves and in some cases reciprocity was not required or artefacts of the same type were exchanged. In some cases Malvern pots, May Hill querns or other artefacts such as glass beads, metalwork may have been exchanged between communities with similar material being returned. Into this picture we might add the exchange of labour to dig enclosure boundaries or for harvesting, exchange of animals, or of people for marriage or as slaves.

The question of “why exchange” therefore need not be just one of functional requirements but may have been stimulated as much by the need to maintain social interaction with other communities. As demonstrated in Chapter 4/6, analysis of the settlement patterns in the Cotswolds and Severn Valley suggested a far more integrated and interactive social system than previously inferred. It was also recognized that whilst communities might be isolated by enclosure boundaries and separated by some distance they still required interaction. The

anthropologist Grøn (1991, 106) has suggested that *physically* separated communities, such as those in the enclosures in this region, require greater interaction with other communities, because of the need to undertake tasks and obtain materials beyond the availability of the household level. This may go some way to explaining why these communities required such distant and distinct sources. Over time this interaction may have taken on a symbolic meaning as well, reaffirming the links between communities within a wider framework. Such interaction may have been a way of negotiating disputes, relationships and alliances without the recourse to conflict or within a perceived wider corporate group.

The apparent link between these exchange processes and specific markers in the landscape of the Malverns, May Hill and Beacon Hill (see above) may have potentially resulted in, or been the result of, a growing concept of a wider community beyond the individual extended household. Such exchange may have been utilized to maintain such a wider community: whilst communities near by may have been related to each other – over time and distance such kin links may have been more symbolic and conceptual than real and the processes of material and labour exchange may have worked to reinforce such social ties. Such relationships may not have formed a cohesive, regional social unity, as is often implied for the MIA (e.g. Cunliffe 1991), but a more loosely based set of social relationships of equal importance in tying together communities and creating a sense of place in the world.

#### ***7.8.4 Production centres and identity: changes in the latest Iron Age?***

If the exchange of material culture was bound up with social relations and issues of identity then the location of production and exchange centres must surely have been crucial in community identity. It has been suggested that Meare and Glastonbury were located on the boundary between the Dobunni and Durotriges, allowing them to operate as independent specialists in production and exchange for these social groups (Cunliffe 1982; Sharples 1991b; Henderson 1991). This relies on a number of assumptions. Firstly, that these defined ‘tribal’ boundaries existed in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, begging the question of how we identify such boundaries beyond the use of coin distributions. Secondly, that ‘tribal’ authority involved control of production and exchange, and that tribal entities (if they existed at all) had significance between the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC, when Glastonbury and Meare were active. We also need to ask whether the other ‘specialist’ production centres for pottery and querns, were focused on such boundaries.

It would seem that the exchange systems of other later Iron Age material culture, such as the Mendip-Glastonbury wares and querns stones, the Lake Villages were not necessarily on the

periphery but active participants. There is a danger, therefore, in such a model of pushing back an ill-defined tribal concept, based on extremely limited evidence from the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, in to a 3<sup>rd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> century BC context, where it has little relevance. Such a model also implies that any ‘tribal’ units wished to have control over production or to isolate its control from their areas. There is little evidence, from the study area at least, for such direct control over production in either the middle or LIA and this relies on an unreliable model of centralized, tribes in later Iron Age society, for which there is little firm evidence.

It is still significant, however, that these locations were marginal to other communities and away from other elements of society. As discussed above, the location of many of these production sites, including querns, pottery, metalworking, briquetage and glass beads appear to have been significant beyond any apparent functional reasons. In all cases an element of ‘marginality’ can be suggested.<sup>112</sup> This need not mean, however, that these processes were isolated or divorced from the communities which they served or engaged with. As argued for quern and pottery production areas, the striking nature and high visibility of these locations suggests that many communities receiving such material may have been acutely aware of them and they may have figured prominently in social relationships as areas of common understanding and concern, possibly integral in the formation of wider, regional identities.

The LIA sites at Bagendon, Salmonsbury and Weston-under-Penyard, all active in production and exchange, can also be argued to have emerged in peripheral locations. These locations do not appear to have been marginal in agricultural or landscape terms but are positioned on the edge of significant material culture distributions including the Malvern wares and, to some extent, May Hill querns. Although there are many problems in regarding such sites as having similar or particular roles (see Ch.6/8), one function at least of the Bagendon-Ditches complex, and possibly of Weston-under-Penyard and Salmonsbury, appear to have been that of production. To this group might also be added Sudbrook for which there is limited but tentative evidence to suggest a similar date range and similar focus on industrial production. In addition, evidence in the form of imported material at these sites and large number of coinage could be argued as indicating a role as exchange centres.

It is important to note that these sites, in particular those of the Bagendon-Ditches complex, do not just emerge on the peripheries of the pottery distribution but also on the edge of the social ties and relationships which I have argued for above. This may be fundamental both to explaining the nature of the communities at these sites and why they emerged in these

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<sup>112</sup> Although how we define such marginality is fraught with difficulties

locations on the peripheries of existing exchange systems. This has wider implications for the nature of these sites, the communities that existed within them, and their relationships with those communities already in existence and the social and economic systems in place. It is important also however to realize that the picture is complex. Just at the Lake Villages engaged in the wider exchange networks, yet were in other ways peripheral, so too the communities at Bagendon/Ditches/Duntisbourne whilst on the edge of the Malvern were distribution, for example, still accessed this material to a significant extent. Therefore, the relationship between the communities exchanging and/or producing the Malvern material was complex and these communities cannot be regarded as isolated from them and it is better to regard their relationships as different.

## **7.9. Conclusions**

There appear to have been complex sets of exchange systems taking place in the region in the later Iron Age. Specialisation of production increased, resulting in specific sites and locations in the landscape which served specific roles. In some cases, the move to more centralized and distant production locations may be linked to the increase in a sense of wider community. This need not have consisted of a defined cultural or ethnic group but in more fluid set of social relationships based on mutual exchange. Over time such social and economic ties may have formed a strong bond between such communities creating a relatively stable social system. In the case of the Malverns and Beacon Hill, the association of these production locations with dramatic and highly visible landscape features appears to have been significant and may have marked either a ritually symbolic association between these artefacts and these locations and/or their role as markers of a sense of wider regional identity.

In the latest Iron Age a number of new communities/ sites emerged as production and exchange centres. In some cases these appear to have developed from existing production locations but elsewhere, particularly at Bagendon, they appear to have been marginal to the existing social and exchange networks. This may mark a move away by such communities from the social and economic ties embodied by such exchange and influence and engagement in new exchange systems to the east.

## Chapter 8

### Narratives of Social Change

#### 8.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters have sought to identify patterns of social organisation and processes of change in the Iron Age of the Severn-Cotswolds. This final chapter represents an attempt to bring this material together in a coherent set of narratives for different period of the Iron Age and to explain the nature and reasons for change in the period. I have used the term 'narratives' to emphasise that it may be wrong to generalise too widely over the processes, reasons and form of change and, although broader patterns and processes exist, each community and region had its own dialogue with the changes taking place in society. In addition, 'narratives' also stresses that the models laid out here do not necessarily represent a final vision of the nature of Iron Age society or reasons for change (and it is expressly noted that no static model should exist) but a 'storyboard' against which future research can react. The following discussion will not completely rehearse the arguments developed in earlier chapters but discuss their salient points and provide some working hypotheses in understanding the nature of Iron Age societies at different times and in different areas and potential reasons for the changes evident.

As discussed in Chapter 1, such narratives have been largely absent from recent discussions of the Iron Age with minimal consideration of how and why the archaeological record changed so radically at certain points. The recent focus on regional archaeologies of the Iron Age (Gwilt and Haselgrove 1997; Bevan 1999) and on certain aspects such as the symbolic use of space and structured deposition has been accompanied by a move away from addressing some of the wider issues of social change in the period reflecting a wider trend in archaeology over the last decade (Sherratt 1995, 2). As Gosden (1997, 304) has noted:

“the present stress on the local, symbolic and ritualised is that it does not give us a broad enough base from which to think”

It has, in effect, restricted models of explanation for patterns of change. Narratives of change in the Iron Age and to some extent social structure have been left to a few individuals (e.g.

Cunliffe 1991; 2000; Haselgrove 1994) and have tended to focus on certain areas, particularly Wessex, or have relied on perpetuating older models such as core-periphery. Despite the vibrancy of theoretical debate in Iron Age studies there has been little attempt to suggest reasons or processes for the social changes in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC with some studies in danger of retreating into an almost homogenous Iron Age (e.g. Fitzpatrick 1997; Giles and Parker-Pearson 1999). Recent studies, however, have recognised the need to explain the processes of change evident in the archaeological evidence in new ways stressing that current narratives of change in Iron Age society have remained dominated by evolutionary models and there is a need to re-engage with wider patterns and offer alternative narratives (Gosden 1997; Creighton 2000; Gerritsen 2003; Hill *forthcoming*). This study has focused on narratives of cultural change, rather than changes in the environment or crop husbandry, because it is through those cultural elements that are so prevalent in the Iron Age record (the houses, enclosure, field boundaries and the 'landscape') and material culture (pottery, quern), that we can see most clearly changes in cultural identity, social relations and organisation.

## **8.2 The early-later Iron Age transition: social upheaval?**

Most notable of the patterns that have emerged in the preceding analysis of the Iron Age in the Severn-Cotswolds, which resonate through different aspects of the material and settlement record, is the impression of radical changes in society around the middle/late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. New classes of settlements emerge in the form of the enclosures so prevalent in the area and the Midlands in general (see Ch. 3/Ch. 6). In addition, around the 4<sup>th</sup> century and slightly earlier we see the emergence of the regional later Iron Age pottery types; the Malvernian and Glastonbury wares. There also appear to be wider changes in attitudes towards space that effected all site types, including many of the so-called unenclosed sites, with an increasing desire to demarcate space even on settlements that may have 'wandered' across the landscape and were not as permanent as enclosures, such as in the Thames Valley (Hingley and Miles 1984; Lambrick 1992). On such unenclosed later Iron Age sites we see an emphasis on defining houses in distinct enclosures. Not all these sites necessarily appeared in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC but the chronology suggests that it is after this point there is an increasing trend on all settlement to define social space more acutely.

The 4<sup>th</sup> century BC marks a watershed in material and social change which appears to be matched elsewhere in southern Britain. Changes in the form and nature of settlement patterns between the earlier and later Iron Age have been noted elsewhere in Britain and suggested as occurring around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC in the Welsh Marches (Jackson 1999b) as well as further

afield as in East Anglia (Davies 1996, 68; Hill *forthcoming*), the east Midlands and north east England (Willis 1999a, 92). This shift in settlement form and society is not the same across the whole of southern Britain and it is interesting that the definition of settlements by enclosure ditches is seen slightly later in south east England. However, in many regions this marks a period of change in the nature of Iron Age societies. In particular, in many there is an increasing emphasis on the boundedness of the community around this time. This process has been argued in similar ways to that for the Severn-Cotswolds. For example, in the East Midlands, Taylor (1997, 196) suggests such changes represent a:

“focus on home or place of dwelling which possibly suggests a long term shift towards increased emphasis or recognition of the separate identity of individuals or households”.

Whilst Hill (*forthcoming*) sees the definition of settlement in the LIA in southern East Anglia as:

“a marked break, the boundaries potentially playing an important role in the self-definition of the communities they contained”

In Wessex, the period around the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC has also been regarded as marking a fundamental change in pottery and the social order exemplified by the restructuring of Danebury and changes in the surrounding landscape (Cunliffe 1995; 2000) although here the emphasis, at least in the immediate Danebury environs, may be one of nucleation (Cunliffe 2000, 184) rather than the rash of enclosures seemingly built in the Cotswolds and Severn valley. The changes around this time seen in central southern Britain (previously argued as the refinement of the tribal system) have been seen as intrinsically linked to population rise (Cunliffe 1991, 533).

On the near continent the period from c. 300BC onwards has also been argued to be a fundamental period of change particularly in northern France (Crumley 1995; 2003). In the low Countries (which have been suggested as having a number of similarities with southern British Iron Age e.g. Hill 1999), Gerritsen (2003, 185) has also identified a “major re-ordering of the social and symbolic landscape” in the middle and LIA<sup>113</sup>, stressing that the family

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<sup>113</sup> The chronology of the Low Countries Iron Age is slightly different to that envisaged for southern Britain (the MIA c500BC-250BC and LIA c250-0BC). However, Gerritsen (2001, 185) stresses that it is only in the late Iron Age (i.e. after 250BC) that this permanency in settlement and social change is most evident which would fit with British evidence.

group may have become more significant social entity than in earlier periods. From this brief survey, it appears that there were major social changes taking place in northern European societies, roughly contemporaneously, around the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC.

This is not to argue that even in the region change around this period was either universal or manifested itself in the same ways. It has been suggested that there were marked differences, for example, between the north and south of the region in settlement form and the 'enclosure horizon' is far less visible in the south here than in the Cotswolds or Severn and (North) Avon valleys. Even here, however, as in the Thames Valley we see the emergence new settlement forms roughly contemporary with these changes, including the Lake Villages and sites like Hallen. These in particular emphasise the move in to what had previously been, if not marginal, at least less densely settled areas of the landscape in the EIA. This further suggests a potential population expansion, the exploitation of different resources and new landscapes and change in the relations within and between settlements.

It can be argued that this dramatic change, at the beginning of the 'middle' or (in this study) the 'later' Iron Age, is the result of the higher visibility of the later Iron Age both in material culture and settlement terms. In addition, it might be argued that this division is a product of the chronological record, the switch from one chronological 'block', as Sherratt (1995) has termed them, to another. The argument of the greater visibility of the later Iron Age is an important point, but in itself does not undermine the point and re-emphasises that the greater visibility reflects the differences seen in settlement form, which themselves reflect wider social changes. As suggested for the greater visibility of material culture in the LIA, which has been argued to reflect wider social changes (Hill 1996; 1997; cf. Haselgrove 1997), the higher visibility of the later Iron Age reflects its difference from the earlier Iron Age; with a greater abundance of material culture and different settlement forms. This can be seen partly through material culture, but more prominently through the higher visibility of settlements in the landscape and changes to the form and nature of those settlements and, with reference to Hill's 'fibula event horizon' (Hill 1995; 1997), we could almost term the beginning of the later Iron Age in the region the 'enclosure event horizon'.

The chronological argument is less problematic. There is admittedly a danger in simplifying the material record to extremes, and it is not being argued that at some defined point in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC social and settlement organisation changed completely, universally and contemporaneously. Instead, the later Iron Age marks a contrasting social and settlement environment to the earlier centuries and marks a distinct change in attitudes towards space and community. The assessment of the chronological framework (Chapter 3) attempted to

represent a fresh look at the dating evidence and re-assess existing chronologies. It is only through such analysis and comparison with other material from the region and elsewhere that this period can be recognised as fundamental in landscape and social change on wider scale.

### **8.3 Explaining the early-later Iron Age transition: Chaos Theory, punctuated equilibrium and Annales approaches**

The concept of radical periods of change, sudden shifts or transitions in later prehistory has been underplayed in recent years (Sherratt 1995; Needham *forthcoming*). The transition between the LBA/EIA and EIA/MIA are both generally suggested to show considerable continuity rather than radical changes. Whilst it has been argued in this study that the LBA/EIA transition does show some continuity, in settlement form and perceptions of the landscape in some areas, it has been recognised that the early to middle (later) Iron Age transition, around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, may mark a relatively radical break in social organisation and in communities perceptions of space. I have suggested above that smaller, household units became more important and expressed this through the definition of boundaries around the household unit. Potentially similar changes in settlement and society appear to have been widespread phenomenon in parts of southern Britain and this wider pattern needs explanation.

Two possible theories from the natural sciences may be helpful in understanding social change in different ways to current models of evolutionary or gradual change. Although these cannot be directly applied they help to suggest a perhaps slightly more dynamic process resulting in social and settlement change. Punctuated equilibrium was developed in the geological and biological sciences (Gould 1980; Somit and Peterson 1992). Simplified, it suggests that:

“evolutionary changes occur in rapid bursts over short periods of time and there is relative stasis after [and prior] to the punctuational burst”

(Somit and Peterson 1992,1)

Within the material we are dealing with, this theory can be argued to emphasise the period around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC as potentially marking a period of radical social change. Such periods of change need not be short lived but in terms of a *long duree* of social developments can appear to represent radical breaks from existing social systems. One of the failings of

such a model is its tendency to see developments prior to such “events” as static. However, we cannot see EIA society as static and change in society, interactions between groups, growth in population was undoubtedly taking place and, if we accept the arguments over agency (Hodder 2000), social groups are always re-producing and modifying themselves.

Chaos theory may help answer such problems. Simplified, chaos theory sees change (often radical and relatively sudden) caused by the influence of either internal dynamics and/or external forces but also that differences in the existing system will effect the outcome. At one time a new influence may merely mean development of social system in line with existing systems, at others radically new developments, whilst at others periods of catastrophe (Turner 1997; Bintliff 1997). Importantly, chaos allows for society to be continually and gradually changing and developing<sup>114</sup> but can be punctuated by short periods of change (see Cunliffe 2000, 193). Within our system this gradual process of change can perhaps be regarded as the process of agents, re-producing and enacting their world (Barrett 2000; Hodder 2000) or the ‘eventments’ of Annales history. In addition, it suggests that the nature of existing societies will effect how and why sudden changes take place. Therefore, in the earlier Iron Age we might regard the already increasing population and an increasing desire for social groups to identify themselves as being factors in the system which, with external influences such as slight climate improvement, may have led to such radical changes. It also accepts that social systems with prior differences will mean that social changes that take place will not be the same (although they may have similarities) (Bintliff 1997, 68). Previous applications have tended to use this theory to explain catastrophic events (particularly the seemingly rapid decline of urban societies; e.g. Bintliff 1991; 1997; Crumley 2003), however, a simplified version of this theory enables us to explain what appear to be radical shifts in the social system of later prehistoric societies but also relate them to potentially longer process of gradual social change. Such periods of change need not be ‘catastrophic’ in any sense.

There is not the space here to argue fully the merits of these two theories and their application in archaeology, nor is it the intention to apply these models directly to the material discussed in preceding chapters. However, both enable us to consciously move away from seeing social developments in Iron Age society either as a social evolutionary development of ever more complex societies or a process of social change driven purely by the actions of individual agents isolated from wider social processes. Instead a more dynamic narrative of change can be suggested.

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<sup>114</sup> Although it would be wrong to say ‘evolving’.

The changes in settlement patterns around this time have been explained in terms of population increase and better farming technology (Cunliffe 1991, 533). Others have argued that changes in society around 300BC (and then again in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD) can be related to changing climate of temperate Europe with a milder climate predominating from the around the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC onwards (Crumley 1995; 2003). Although all of these developments may undoubtedly be factors, it seems that population was already increasing in the LBA and EIA and we should be cautious not to confuse the pattern of a more archaeologically visible later Iron Age and seemingly more ephemeral earlier 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC with a complete absence of the latter. Within the Chaos model we can regard population increase as one element in a multitude of factors that existed in the middle centuries of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC which influenced a perhaps increasing desire by communities to identify themselves through boundaries, one that had developed since the LBA but took on greater impetus in the later Iron Age and identified the household and kin group rather than landscapes. In addition, the gradual emergence of larger social groups, perhaps indicated by the shift to regional exchange systems (which also appears to have been relatively gradual but taken on a new impetus around the 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC), meant an increasing need for communities to stress their identify within this wider network. In chronological terms these processes, therefore, may have been slightly longer and drawn out but it is around the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC onwards that we see the elements visibly manifest themselves in the archaeological record. Although such a narrative is inevitably simplistic it enables a combination of all the levels of archaeology discussed above; the action of agents within wider long term process of change.

#### **8.4 Later Iron Age society: local and regional identities?**

This study has emphasised the diversity and complexity of settlement patterns across the region in the later Iron Age reflecting the regionality that characterises much of Iron Age Britain (Hingley 1984a; Gwilt and Haselgrove 1997). However, amidst the diversity, patterns are evident, such as that noted above, and some generalisations on the nature of wider social systems can be suggested.

One of the main characteristics of settlement in the Cotswolds and Severn Valley as been the clustering of enclosures within what appear to be well organised and structured landscapes. These clusters appear to represent larger social groups made up of independent (extended) households. Alongside botanical evidence (Stevens 1996), this has suggested that models of isolated communities, independent from one another (Hingley 1984a) are somewhat

simplistic and that communities were integrated into more complex social groups through the organisation of the land. Within this picture there is no obvious evidence for settlement hierarchy and little evidence that hillforts acted as central places. However, the role of hillforts as focal monuments should not be completely underplayed and they may have had important wider social roles. There is no direct evidence to indicate whether hillforts were the residences of an elite or indeed if 'elites' existed at all in the later Iron Age, in terms of greater focus on production (which Chapter 7 has shown to vary between sites) or in the consumption of particular material culture (cf. Morris 1994; 1996). More likely it seems there were groups (households?) fluctuating in status, commanding 'allegiance' from other groups at certain times in the community's life, through social bonds, marriage alliances and gift exchange. Many hillforts it seems, particularly smaller examples such as Conderton, probably had similar roles to the ditched enclosures. Many such sites potentially changed roles throughout their histories (Cunliffe 1995; Barrett *et al* 2000) and sites like Bredon Hill, for example, may have acted as a symbolic or ritual foci at certain times, particularly later in life, whilst Midsummer Hill seems more similar to some early sites and may have been primarily storage centre for a more dispersed population.

In the south, a potentially more varied landscape is envisaged with less emphasis on bounding the household and community through enclosure ditches. The reasons for this difference are unclear but suggest perhaps that the maintenance of social relationships and identity of settlements/households was not maintained through the digging and recutting of enclosure ditches but potentially in other ways. The use of cave sites and meeting places like the Lake Villages may have been instrumental in this as locations where transformation processes, such as metal production, meeting places for negotiation and exchange and the deposition of human remains could be worked out in areas away from the main domestic foci. In addition there is a pattern of apparent LIA settlements with phases dating to around the 1st century BC/AD but apparently no earlier and many of these go on to become Roman settlements, which is matched by sites in east Wales at Thornwell, Portskewett, Caldicot and Whitton. Here too though the dating may be less explicit than is suggested. At Thornwell for example, group K pottery is characteristically MIA and is not associated with any wheel thrown wares. The phasing of the site is by no means entirely secure and it is entirely possible therefore that pre-1st century BC phases did exist and the same may be true for some of the other Welsh sites.

The later Iron Age is also characterised by the development of regional exchange systems in pottery, querns and briquetage. These operated in two distinct spheres in the north and south of the region. The exchange systems in querns and pottery developed out of production sites

that emerged perhaps as early as the Neolithic, in the case of querns stones, and later Bronze Age for Malvern pottery (see Chapter 7). However, it is in the later Iron Age that we see the dominance of these exchange networks and decline in local production. The fact that both the north and south had similar sources for pottery and querns, focused on specific, highly visible areas of the landscape, seems to suggest that similar processes were at work in the relation between society and production and exchange. Both production and exchange were clearly becoming more centralised and specialised as society appears to have grown in complexity. However, the similarities in exchange patterns masks the apparent differences in settlement patterns between the two areas and suggest the complexity of social networks underlying material culture and settlement form.

The exchange systems have been suggested as indicating that household communities, shown in the north to be often grouped in clusters, were involved not only in local relationships and negotiations over land rights but also potentially tied in to wider group identities that recognised the visible landmarks where the pottery and querns came from (see Fig. 7.4.8). These 'regional identities' were probably not rigid, ethnic identities, as suggested in cultural-historical approaches, but fluid sets of social relationships that tied communities together and provided bonds between households, kin groups and more distant communities. Importantly, they perhaps imply an increased sense of place in the later Iron Age (Taylor 1997) and even of shared identity. These identities are crucial when assessing the changes that took place in the LIA. It is against this environment, of complex and embedded relationships, embedded through the landscape of field and enclosure boundaries, through regional exchange systems of pottery, querns and other material, through social and kin relationships that the LIA communities emerged. As discussed in Chapter 5, it is difficult to argue that the later Iron Age, on this evidence, represents a necessarily less egalitarian society than the EIA or LBA but one where definition of the household, through enclosure rather than in other forms, was more important than earlier, rather than a society that was more hierarchical.

### **8.5 The Late Iron Age: a fracturing society?**

The nature of change in the LIA appears to be very different from that envisaged at the beginning of the later Iron Age. The very term 'later' Iron Age has been used in this study to emphasise the strong elements of continuity in material culture and, in some areas, settlement location and form, between what is traditionally termed the 'middle' and 'late' Iron Age (Chapter 3) also seen in other areas of southern Britain (Cunliffe 1991; Hill 1999; 2002). The kind of dramatic changes in society in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC cannot necessarily be

argued for all parts of the region, although some show greater evidence for settlement upheaval at this time (Chapter 6). This is not to say that the region was unchanging in the LIA but emphasises the complexity of this period and varying reaction of different settlement, communities and regions.

The appearance of the large ditched complexes, known as oppida, appears to be key in these changes. This development in southern Britain has traditionally been explained in terms of a core-periphery model (Haselgrove 1982; 1987; Cunliffe 1988; 1991). Simplified, this suggested that increased contact with the Roman world indirectly through the more developed communities of the south east, meant that communities in the region acted as a periphery supplying the south east, and indirectly the Roman world, with goods such as slaves, agricultural produce and raw materials in return for imports including pottery and exotica. Crucial in such arguments was the causal influence of *external* forces as stimulating change in the 'peripheries' even if the consequences were unintended or developed a dynamism beyond the initial causes (Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978; Haselgrove 1987, 105).

More recently Hill (2002; *forthcoming*) has suggested that we might reverse the core-periphery model, suggesting that those areas regarded as core were often peripheral to pre-existing settlement and social systems. Hill sees change as *internal* to existing social systems, although the existence of new communities either from within existing societies or migrating from outside is also regarded as important (Hill *forthcoming*). Whilst Hill's model focuses on eastern England, how does another so-called periphery, one displaying some of the characteristics of the core in sites like Bagendon, fit with both such models? The location of Bagendon, Salmonsbury and to some extent the banjo enclosures may be crucial in explaining the nature of LIA society and the role of some of these sites. Analysis of Bagendon (Chapter 7) suggested that it is situated on the edge of the LIA exchange distributions of Malvern wares, and to some extent the distribution of May Hill querns (Fig 7.4.1), away from the creation of the strong local, and potentially regional, identities developing in the later Iron Age. Considering the strong social bonds that are potentially implied by these exchanges this may be crucial in explaining their appearance, being deliberately situated in areas of the landscape where such social ties were less rigid. Bagendon also emerges in a landscape seemingly devoid of earlier occupation and in this respect is also similar to other LIA sites, particularly Verulamium (Haselgrove and Millett 1997; Hill *forthcoming*; Bryant *forthcoming*) and Silchester (Haselgrove 1995). Again this seems to suggest that Bagendon did not develop from an existing social centre, such as the dense clusters of enclosures as we might expect, but was situated in a 'new' landscape. Bagendon may not be alone in this and the location of the banjo enclosures can also be argued as similarly 'peripheral', emerging on

the interface between the Cotswolds and Thames Valley. Can a similar process to Hill's be argued therefore; that LIA communities developed away from the existing 'core' social networks as new communities in a marginal landscape?

There are a number of factors which suggest a more complex set of developments taking place in the Severn-Cotswolds. Hill (2002; forthcoming) perhaps overly characterizes the core-periphery model. Haselgrove's and Cunliffe's earlier models recognised that the new communities of the LIA developed on the peripheries of existing social systems and established new settlements away from what they regarded as existing social centres (Haselgrove 1982; 1987; Cunliffe 1988). However, one failing of this approach was to regard this as an evolutionary process, developing out of existing social hierarchies. Both the core-periphery model and Hill's reversal, however, to some extent recognised that it was potentially those societies on the peripheries of existing core developments who developed their own dynamic, leading to radical social developments. It is this that appears to be the case in the Severn-Cotswolds with Bagendon emerging away from existing social networks.

In addition we need to ask what was taking place in the apparently under utilised areas of the landscape which resulted in the emergence of sites like Bagendon. MIA material still remains undetected in the Bagendon environs (Fig. 8.1a; Fig. 6.1.4.8), and alongside the limited cropmark data indicate less evidence for *dense* occupation in this period. Fig.8.1a may suggest that there was, at least in some areas in the north a divergent relationship between LIA and 'middle' Iron Age settlement. However, although variability in settlement density has been suggested in the later Iron Age, with clusters of enclosures and areas of less (permanent) settlement (see above; cf. Hill 1999), variation, diversity and complexity of later Iron Age land use has also been recognised in the region with, for example, the rectangular buildings in the Gwent levels (Bell *et al* 2000), the Lake Villages in the Somerset and Avon levels and the seasonal settlement at Farmoor in the upper Thames (Lambrick and Robinson 1979). Such diversity implies that few areas of the region were deliberately neglected and suggests the landscape Bagendon was built in had other roles in the later Iron Age.

An additional problem in Hill's model is that it perhaps underplays the relationship between a later Iron Age core and the communities of the LIA periphery. In the Severn-Cotswolds this might be characterised by the 'core' Malvern pottery using areas of the Cotswolds and Severn Valley, with a periphery on the Cotswold dip slope/Upper Thames Valley area in which Bagendon is located. It is clear, at least in the study area, that the relationship between these areas was far from simple. Bagendon, Ditches and the Duntisbourne sites all show evidence of Malvern derived pottery both in handmade form and as early Severn Valley wares

suggesting contact with these areas. We cannot over emphasise this relationship but clearly these sites were not isolated from existing communities. In other material culture terms, however, the LIA sites appear to have differed, for example in no longer using May Hill querns (7.4), emphasising the complexity of the relationships with existing exchange networks.

It is also unwise not to allow for the possibility that the developments seen in settlement patterns and material culture in the region were related to changes underway elsewhere in southern Britain and northern Europe. It is the nature of that influence which is crucial. In the past there has been a tendency to simplify the core-periphery model seeing these changes driven purely by the Roman Empire exerting pressure on south eastern tribal societies. However, the relations of such societies with the Roman Empire has been shown to be complex and to relate to power struggles and relations within Iron Age societies (Creighton 2000). Previous models also perhaps saw all Iron Age societies as falling in to two simple groups of the periphery and core. However, it is clear even from within the Severn-Cotswolds which shows a diversity of reactions to and relations with the changes in society. It also seem unlikely that the development of Bagendon, Salmonsbury (and indeed Dyke Hills and Abingdon) on important route ways was entirely co-incidental in their development and the argument that these sites performed some role as exchange centres, between a south eastern core and western periphery (Cunliffe 1988; Sherratt 1996), cannot be completely ignored. The existence of imported and new forms of pottery at these sites, particularly the Bagendon complex, and their limited numbers on later Iron Age settlements elsewhere (even sites like Frocester) clearly suggests that these communities were influenced by changes to the east that were not so widely felt elsewhere.

What role then did these LIA sites have? It seems insufficient to regard them merely as communities who developed on the margins in response to influence from the east<sup>115</sup>. It also seems perhaps simplistic to see them purely as 'emporia' controlling trade between a 'periphery' and core. The lack of imported pottery on many other sites in the region, suggests one of their aims was not to re-distribute this material in exchange for produce then exported on the south east core as in the central place and core-periphery models (*contra* Cunliffe 1988, 156; Fichtl 2000).

Examination of the exchange patterns of the later Iron Age shows that Bagendon in particular (along with banjo enclosures) was peripheral to the existing social networks and exchange

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<sup>115</sup> And Dyke Hills and Abingdon certainly appear in a landscape that was densely occupied or utilised in the early and middle Iron Age.

systems. Why then did the complex develop in this area, yet still appear to be engaged in relationships with these communities? As I have shown, there was a growing emphasis in the later Iron Age on production and exchange centres being located away from 'normal' modes of settlement in areas of the landscape. This can be seen with the Malvern and Glastonbury (Mendips) pottery producers, quern sources and use of cave sites for metalworking. These locations also appear to have intentionally been liminal with an emphasis on divorcing them from the domestic routines of everyday life (Hingley 1997). Crucially, it is in such locations where production and exchange sites appear also have been located, most clearly at Glastonbury.

There is evidence too that, like many 'oppida', Bagendon was engaged in industrial activities including iron smelting and production, coin minting etc. Ethnography (Helms 1988) has stressed that important meeting places, essential in maintaining social relations between communities, often emerge on the peripheries of the domestic arena, located in neutral space. This has been stressed for the Lake Villages, potentially on the boundary between later Iron Age social groups or tribes (Sharples 1991b; Coles and Minnit 1995) and suggested for some other 'oppida', including Verulamium (Haselgrove and Millett 1997; Bryant *forthcoming*). Can we see Bagendon in a similar light, emerging here because of its location as a liminal area between existing regional social networks, including the exchange networks of Malvern pottery and May Hill querns, and away from the social bonds of enclosure clusters on the Cotswolds and unenclosed communities in the Thames Valley, as well as on the margins of relatively entrenched social relations of the later Iron Age Severn-Cotswolds and changing communities of the south east? In such a model Bagendon can be envisaged as a meeting place, exchange centre and production site rather similar to Glastonbury. Part of the existing social systems, but also crucially set apart from it and not developing in a vacuum from existing social networks or attitudes towards the landscape.

Other roles, particularly for Bagendon, may also suggest a complex set of relations with existing attitudes towards the area in which the site was set and to why it developed. Verulamium has been suggested as focused around the temple sites in the valley and that the site developed from a ritual landscape (Haselgrove and Millett 1997, 274; Bryant *forthcoming*). It is probably significant that it is in these damp, marshy areas that coin production appears to have taken place (Haselgrove and Millett 1997, 274), which is also the case at Bagendon. The relationship between coin deposition (and production) and ritual sites has been noted elsewhere (Haselgrove 1987; Haselgrove *et al* 1993) and may be suggested at other sites in the region. The LIA site at Wycomb [64], for example, produced a coin flan (Timby 1998) and the site developed into a Roman Temple complex. It may suggest that coin

production and use, whether or not linked to a new ruling elite (e.g. Creighton 2000), was also closely linked to ritual roles and may even have been used primarily in ritual contexts and deposited on temples and in ritual locations (cf. Haselgrove 1993). This suggests that at least some of these sites were located in such peripheries because of important ritual or symbolic roles for these locations, which may even have stemmed from earlier attitudes towards these landscapes. As Helms (1988, 12) has noted, control over locations outside the 'domestic' sphere, and of knowledge of elsewhere (the 'foreign' and exotic) can be another way of maintaining power and may have been another factor both in why Bagendon was located here and in how the community maintained power, not necessarily just through trade with external groups but also because of a knowledge and perceived ritual power through such contact.

The form of the earthworks at Bagendon and the banjo complexes may also have been crucial in this in this respect. Bryant (*forthcoming*) has recently suggested that the arrangement of the earthworks at Verulamium (perhaps Bagendon's closest parallel) may have operated as route ways directing access in to the ritual site from which Verulamium emerged (Haselgrove and Millett 1997). This use of boundaries to restrict and control access has been seen as a key element in controlling and maintain power, particular in a ritualised environment as these sites may be. Tilley (1994, 27), for example, has noted that:

“the ability to control access to and manipulate particular settings for action is a fundamental feature of the operation of power as domination”.

The use of space is paramount at Bagendon and the antenna ditches of the banjo complexes as well as other large LIA 'oppida' such as Verulamium and Bibracte. In all cases, conveying both power and ritual significance through the maintenance of specialised areas may have been essential. It is uncertain whether the banjo enclosure complexes performed similar roles, as has been suggested elsewhere in Hampshire (Corney 1989, 2002), but their elaborate entrances would suggest this. It has also been suggested elsewhere that the presence of antenna ditches at all these sites, alongside their location in valley bottom locations, may also relate to a new economic role and the growing importance of the horse in LIA society (Creighton 2000, 17; Cunliffe and Poole 2000b; Hill *forthcoming*). This adoption of new economic wealth may have been another element of their power base but evidence from the region, in the form of horse gear from such sites (as seen for example from Bury Hill), has not been forthcoming.

Within such a model for LIA sites we need not entirely dispense with an emerging 'elite' in the LIA who were linked to these sites (Haselgrove 1987; Creighton 2000). We can however

envisage a far more complex power struggle and claims to power based on exclusion, located away from existing social and exchange networks whilst developing new sets of social relationships with groups elsewhere.

We have to be careful not to argue that all so-called oppida developed along similar lines. This group of monuments is heterogeneous (Collis 1984; Cunliffe 1994; Woolf 1993). Other sites described as oppida in the region (Salmonsbury, Camerton, Weston-under-Penyard, Gloucester) probably represent very different settlement entities and fulfilled very different roles. Salmonsbury, for example (and possibly Abingdon, Dyke Hills and Uley Bury), appears similar to 'oppida' in northern France, potentially representing the nucleation of communities located in to a single enclosure but continuing to operate as individual units. Far more work on these sites is needed to support such a theory but it seems clear that Salmonsbury performed a distinct role from Bagendon. It may, however, have had a similar emphasis as an exchange centre, located as it is on a route way between the Windrush, Dikler and Thames (Sherratt 1996).

Examination of the role of these monuments has allowed a somewhat more complex model of later/LIA society to emerge. This brings us to question of the existence and role of the supposed tribal entity; the Dobunni. It seems hard to correlate a unified, hierarchical tribal group with the model outlined above for the role of Bagendon and other LIA ditch complexes. However, the regional coin distribution cannot be ignored, despite the fact that LIA coinage had multiple, complex and potentially changing roles in society with most probably deposited post conquest (6.3). One way of squaring the model outlined above and the impression from the coinage of coin issuing elites is in seeing Iron Age societies not necessarily as hierarchical in a traditional sense but having more complex systems of power. Many past models (Van Arsdell 1994) have tended to see LIA society as rigidly hierarchical in the form of proto states or chiefdoms. However, it has long been recognised that hierarchical models do "not capture the full range of state organisational relations" evident in later Iron Age societies (Crumley 1974; 2003, 3) and do not fit well with much of the classical sources available. Other studies have also shown the potential instability and state of flux of LIA power bases which need not have necessarily stemmed from an existing hierarchical system (e.g. Creighton 2000).

Can we perceive a more unstable and complex set of power relations? One which fits with the archaeological evidence described above but still explains why Roman administration and classical writers had a (no matter how misconceived) notion of a tribal entity in the region and explains the existence of regionalised coins. The evidence from later Iron Age suggests no centralised tribal or ethnic identity existed but that there may have been a sense of broad,

inter-regional identities based on clusters of enclosure and communities engaged in regional exchange. These identities were maintained by activities such as cutting landscape boundaries, negotiations over land rights, marriages and the exchange of material culture, including pottery and querns. These may have formed loose economic and kinship ties but together formed relatively strong social links. Although, it has been argued that the communities at Bagendon, and in the banjo complexes, may represent new groups engaged in different practices there is no reason to suggest that similar modes of social relationships and interactions did not apply to these also. As Crumley (2000, 3) has suggested, in a heterarchical model there need not be a defined power centre but groups who could be ranked in different ways at different times. Relationships within and between groups could be complex; shifting as political alliances were made and broken. Such a model would fit far better with the evidence from the region with the group at Bagendon at times having power over other communities but not necessarily in any defined, unified 'tribal' sense. The 'Dobunni' that the Romans perceived were thus a far more fractured and unstable unit (as the classical sources appear to hint at: Dio Cassius LX, 20; Sauer 2000) that may only have existed for a very short time in the mid-late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Moore and Reece 2001). In this light the coinage evidence, therefore, may best be seen as tokens of allegiance or social bonds between groups or individuals (cf. Collis 1971; Haselgrove 1993; Creighton 2000), potentially explaining the varied distributions of different types. A role as tokens of allegiance might also explaining their deposition on sacred sites; as similar oaths, pledges or gifts between individuals and the gods.

This model still owes something to earlier explanations. Unlike the core-periphery model the community at the Bagendon complex no longer need be an aristocratic elite utilising the resources of a tribal area but exploiting power relations with other groups and contacts with external groups to build a significant power base. These communities, whilst relating to existing communities and social networks, developed on the margins of them and as such were unconstrained by the established social networks of the upper Cotswolds, Severn valley or Thames valley, in areas not so intimately bound in to existing sets of social and economic ties. This allowed a dynamism to these groups enabling them to embrace and explore the potential offered by new contacts with the south east and later the Roman world directly. This allowed these communities to develop in the early Roman period, indicated by the development of early Roman villas at Ditches, Whittington and the banjo sites (cf. Hingley 1984a, 83). Bagendon, therefore, was not a capital for a tribal entity but the location of a new kind of 'elite'. These groups used their location in the landscape, the ritual roles of some of these locations and exploitation of new exchange systems to gain power in a different way to that seen in the earlier centuries. Where as in the past ownership of land and/or social bonds,

created through marriages and exchange, was probably key to status and power, these new elites base focused around a potentially significant ritual location exploiting its locations and creating social bonds.

## 8.6 Resistance and acceptance

A key element of this model of LIA society is its state of flux and the different reactions of communities to changes taking place. Some communities rapidly adopted new foodways, burial rites and settlement forms and new exchange networks with the south east. Other communities appear to have only partly entered into new relationships (social bonds, trade or alliances) with the new LIA communities. These may be indicated in the archaeological record by just a single LIA coin or imported pottery, as for example at Birdlip or Frocester, yet changed little else of their way of life. Elsewhere, resistance to change may have been violent as communities appeared to have fragmented in the LIA (Barrett 2000, 323).

Each community, therefore, varied in its reaction to these changes: the impact of new exchange systems, the emergence of new LIA sites and later the direct impact of the Roman presence. These changes were not just the external forces of trade in the core-periphery model (Cunliffe 1988) or processes of 'Romanisation' (Millett 1990) but internal forces as societies shifted and adapted to internal pressures, such as competition over land (Hill *forthcoming*). The evidence stresses that locally and regionally communities reacted in different ways. In some areas, as appears to have been the case at sites like Chew Park, Butcombe, or Frocester communities were able to adapt to new ways of living in the same location. One question is whether the seemingly divergent settlement patterns of the later Iron Age influenced or effected different reactions to change in the LIA. Although broad differences can be suggested between the north and south (Chapter 6), what is more evident is the diversity across the region towards change in the LIA. What is possible is that some communities, particularly in the north and west of the Severn deliberately rejected changes to existing social networks (represented in material culture and settlement patterns) (cf. Gwilt *forthcoming*). However, it is difficult to argue this represents entire peoples or regions who were more or less 'Romanised', instead a far more diverse set of reactions and sequences is evident.

Around the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC/AD changes in ritual and belief systems are evident in the region reflecting changes seen elsewhere in southern Britain where they have been regarded as reflecting wider social changes (Hill 1995; Cunliffe 2000, 195). In the region, new burials occur around this time with wealthy inhumations at High Nash and Birdlip and the appearance, potentially for the first time, of specialised sanctuary sites, at Uley West Hill

(Woodward and Leach 1992). Alongside this, however, there was also continued practicing of earlier rites of disposing of human remains, as seen for example at Bagendon and Ditches. More clearly than in the earlier centuries there is clear distinction between those who adopted new rites and those that continued to practice traditional rites. However, it also seems that the two co-existed in the same communities and it may have been only those of high status, who were allowed, were willing or understood the new burial rites, who adopted them. The same appears true of the new foodways and dining equipment. The dining arena has been regarded as a crucial area where social relations, structures and hierarchies are worked out and the change in dining equipment has been regarded as reflecting fundamental changes in social authority and structures (Hill 2002). In the region such processes appear to have taken place relatively late and affected only a few communities. In addition, these developments do not simply mimic changes in the Roman or Gallo-Belgic world, or even south east England (Hill 2002; *forthcoming*). There is, for example, little evidence for cremation appearing in the region as seen elsewhere (Cunliffe 1988). Instead, burial rites, as with the new forms of settlement, were modifications and developments that also related to earlier practices and potentially influences from other areas such as the south west.

The so-called massacre deposits also emphasise the conflict and complexity in beliefs and new ways of living around the early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. I have suggested these elaborate depositions are not entirely dissimilar to other boundary deposits of human remains seen elsewhere in the region and beyond (Chapter 5). However, their large scale seems to indicate a need for increased elaboration, possibly as these sites had become increasingly important as ritual foci as communities sought to work out ritual beliefs (and the social relationships intertwined with such practices) on a larger, more visible scale. This took place as smaller scale deposits, embedded in the practice of everyday life, no longer seemed enough to maintain social bonds. These explanations suggest a more fractious society and need not be mutually exclusive from the evidence, in the form of sword cuts and traumatic deaths at Cadbury, Sutton and Bredon, of a potentially more conflict and warfare ridden society. The developments in belief systems emphasise the complexity and fracturing of society, some adopting lavish new burial rites whilst other communities or members of the community continued in the older traditions, whilst elsewhere dramatic attempts to embellish existing rites at sites that had changed role or became focused on ritual roles that had only been an element before. As Barrett (2000, 323) has suggested for Cadbury through these processes we can see:

“a fragmentation, perhaps instigated by certain elite elements who began to recast themselves to becoming Roman and thus necessarily reinventing their own

histories and identities along the way, will have cut adrift others who by desire, incomprehension or lack of opportunity, continued to speak of themselves and their identities in traditional terms.”

This neatly sums up the diversity and complexity of the LIA in the Severn-Cotswolds, with communities at Bagendon (possibly new elites) adapting lifestyles and economies to integrate with new ways of life whilst other groups were relatively unaffected by change and, as Hill (forthcoming) has suggested for southern East Anglia:

“... continued on trajectories already established in earlier centuries.”

Others communities dramatically resisted change to their lifestyles, some potentially violently. For the LIA, therefore, no single narrative exists but a diverse range of localised processes of change. There is little evidence for a linear model of evolution from later Iron Age tribal society but the de-stabilising effect of influence from the south east (Haselgrove 1982; 1987; Cunliffe 1988) meant that particular groups emerged as dominant whilst others operated on traditional terms.

## **8.7 Conclusions and prospects for the future**

This assessment of the Iron Age in the Severn-Cotswolds has tried to use the region to cast a wider light on the changes in society in the later Iron Age in particular. By taking a regional study, wider resonance can be found in the chronological and social processes of change with the rest of southern England and even northern Europe. It has been suggested that the existence of such broad patterns across large geographical areas, notable not only in architecture (Oswald 1997; Pope 2003), but also settlement form, patterns of deposition and (very broadly) in social change, has been neglected in recent years in favour of a far more regional and insular British Iron Age. Many of the patterns that are seen in the Severn-Cotswolds can be seen as far afield as northern France (e.g. Roymans 1990; Haselgrove 1995) as well as elsewhere in Britain. The realisation that the Iron Age of Britain cannot be studied in isolation is gaining ground in recent works (Cunliffe 2001; Henderson *forthcoming*) with the acceptance that only by looking at a wider perspective can the influences and reasons for change be better discerned. In addition, it is only by placing regional studies in a wider context that the differences, idiosyncrasies and divergence of particular areas and communities can be highlighted and explained. Do they represent the reworking and modification of wider social, cosmological or economic patterns elsewhere, as suggested in an

'idiosyncratic model', or a deliberate rejection of those wider traditions and choices? It has also been suggested that the current disenchantment with chronologies of the Iron Age (Collis 1997) may be hindering the acknowledgment of the dynamic and sometimes relative sudden processes of social change. Analysis of a growing corpus of C14 dates associated with pottery is particularly useful in assessing current chronological frameworks.

This study shows that discussion of wider landscape may be achieved from even a limited set of data and the combining of cropmark material and the results of even limited excavations can enable sites to be put into a wider landscape context. Such an approach lends greater value to excavated and stray find material that exists in reports and SMRs but is often overlooked. The presence, for example, of at first sight uninteresting gullies of Iron Age date from one site may, when combined with cropmark evidence, have implications for a much wider array of field boundaries and settlements, as seen in both the Bredon Environs and the Preston area. Further plotting of all cropmarks in the region as part of the National Mapping Program will enable more detailed analysis and comparison with other areas of the country.

The advent of PPG 16 has been instrumental in providing an increased data set. Despite the limited nature of much of this material, it is beginning to change our perceptions of the nature of occupation in certain areas of the region. However, the growth in this data set should not blind us to the necessity of placing it in a wider context and there is a danger in using this material to create descriptive but less interpretative Iron Ages. The impact of PPG 16 has been virtually negligible in certain areas where we remain reliant on earlier investigations and other sources of information such as cropmarks. Future research needs to focus on these areas and place small scale PPG 16 work in a broader context. This thesis has also highlighted classes of monuments which remain undated and poorly understood, despite their potential importance in understanding social organisation and change. These include the banjo complexes, increasingly being revealed through air photography, but also Bagendon and Salmonsbury, which despite earlier fieldwork programmes we still do not understand. Investigation and re-evaluation of these sites and their placing in a wider context, particular of surrounding and preceding settlement patterns should be a priority of future research in the region. Only then can we create a more meaningful picture of Iron Age landscapes, social organisation and why and how change took place.

