PLATE A. AERIAL VIEW OF OLDBURY FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.
In the background the southern scarp of the North Downs.
(Reproduced by the courtesy of Major G. W. Allen.)

EXCAVATIONS ON OLDBURY HILL, IGHTHAM, 1938.

BY J. B. WARD PERKINS.

Introductory Note

Early in the year 1938 it was announced that the Kent Archæological Society, acting in association with the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Royal Archæological Institute, the British Archæological Association and the Prehistoric Society, proposed to undertake the excavation of the Iron Age earthworks on Oldbury Hill, Ightham. The response to an appeal for funds was generous and enabled the Excavation Committee to employ nearly a score of labourers for about six weeks during September and early October, 1938.

It is impracticable to name everyone whose willing co-operation contributed to make the excavations a success, but a few individual acknowledgements must be given. Mr. H. A. Hooker, the owner of Oldbury Hill, readily gave permission for the work, allowing the excavators to dig wherever they pleased and himself supplying labour for the infilling of some of the trenches. Mr. Arthur Franks and Miss Hutton rendered much practical help in storing tools, supplying water and in other ways. Messrs. Godwin, Hobson and Hovenden, by digging trial holes during the summer of 1938, greatly facilitated later work. During the excavation period much assistance was given by Misses Brabazon, Butler, de Cardi and Mitchell and by Messrs. Bradford, Field, Greenfield, Pyddoke, Scott, Whimster and Zammit. To them and to all others who helped in the field sincere thanks are due. Acknowledgements for help in the preparation of this paper are gratefully tendered to Dr. R. E. M. Wheeler, V.P.S.A., Mr. C. F. C. Hawkes, F.S.A., Mr. A. W. G. Lowther, F.S.A., Mr. D. F. Allen, Dr. Gordon Ward, F.S.A., Mr. S. Priest, F.G.S., Dr. I. D. Margary, F.S.A., Mr. H. G. Dines, F.G.S., and those others who have

assisted with information about Kentish or other relevant material. Facilities for the examination and illustration of such material were freely given at the British Museum and the Dartford, Maidstone and Sevenoaks Museums, and by Messrs. J. P. T. Burchell, R. F. Jessup, S. E. Winbolt and Drs. I. D. Margary and Gordon Ward. The writer also expresses his sincere thanks to the Excavation Committee, and especially to Sir Edward Harrison, for their constant support.

Considerations of space and expense have necessarily limited this report to matters directly concerning the actual excavations. A further account will, however, shortly appear in *Archæologia*, and this will contain a fuller discussion of the comparative Iron Age material from West Kent together with check-lists of all recorded finds from this region and of the hill-forts of South-eastern Britain, upon which the distribution-map, Fig. 2, is based. The crisis of September, 1938, unfortunately made it necessary to close down the work rather hurriedly, leaving a few minor points unsettled; but these could hardly have seriously affected the main conclusions. Finally it may be noted in extenuation that this report was finished only after war had broken out, and while the writer was engaged in digging trenches of a very different sort.[1]

The Site.

Oldbury Hill (Fig. 1), which lies about half a mile to the west of Ightham village,[2] has been from the earliest times a centre of human occupation. With the earlier prehistoric periods we are not here concerned. The evidence has been summarized by Sir Edward Harrison in *Archæologia Cantiana*, XLV (1933), 142-61; and it indicates continuous settlement in the neighbourhood from the palæolithic period onwards, although it is the middle palæolithic rock-shelters alone which have as yet revealed any certain traces of actual habitation

[1] The Editor, who spent some days at Oldbury, must add his appreciation of the Author's work in checking the history of the site, and his methods of work.

[2] O.S. 25-in. sheets XXIX 16, XL 3 and XL 4.

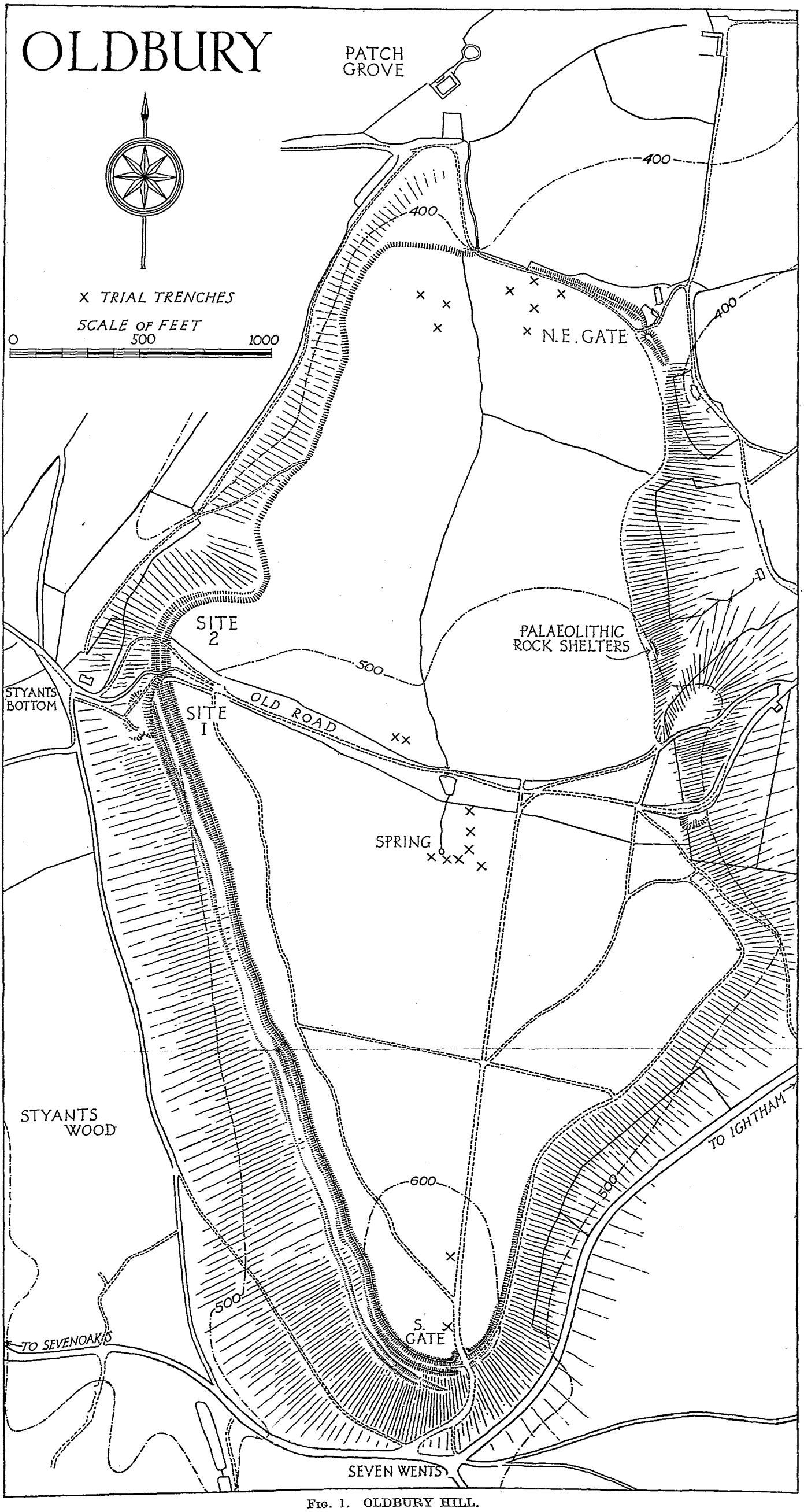

FIG. 1. OLDBURY HILL.

(Based on the Ordnance Survey by permission of the Director General, Ordnance Survey.)

on the hill itself. Towards the close of the Early Iron Age, however, the hill was fortified by the erection of a bank and ditch round the summit. Chance finds and excavation have alike failed to prove the existence of any permanent settlement within the area defended. Such settlement there may have been; but it may be regarded as certain that the camp was primarily the fortified centre of a considerable scattered Iron Age population in the neighbourhood of Seal Chart and Ightham. It was with the character of the defences themselves and with their date that the excavations were mainly concerned.

The hill is a site of considerable natural strength. This is not immediately apparent; for to the south and south-west it is overlooked by the slightly higher ground of the main Lower Greensand ridge, of which it is a lateral extension. At the southern end a track leads down from the South Gate across a low saddle to join the main ridge; but elsewhere the steep, and in places precipitous, slopes form a strong natural defence, of which the builders of the camp made full use. Only towards the north does the hill slope gently and uniformly from the highest point by the South Gate, right down to the valley which lies at the foot of the scarp of the North Downs. Apart from its size (123 acres within the ramparts) the hill was well suited to the needs of prehistoric defence.

In its present form the earthwork, save for the passage of the medieval Sevenoaks-Ightham road above Styant's Bottom, is continuous from the South Gate, above Seven Wents, right round the western brow of the hill to the north end of the camp, where it swings eastwards and ends at the point where the stream leaves the camp. Immediately to the east of the stream there is a short gap caused by the deliberate levelling of the rampart in the nineteenth century, after which it runs for some 200 yards slightly south of east across comparatively level ground, and ends sharply on the brow of the steep scarp-slope of the eastern face of the hill, about 120 feet to the east of the original north-east gate. Most of the eastern face of the hill has been much damaged by quarrying, and the absence of any certain trace of

artificial defences on this side cannot therefore be regarded as conclusive proof that the hill was never so defended. But at the eastern end of the northern sector the end of the rampart is clearly defined and bears no trace of subsequent disturbance. Here at any rate the builders of the camp seem to have considered the natural slope of the ground to be in itself a sufficient defence, and it is on the whole probable that the formidable cliffs of the eastern face of the hill never carried more than a wooden stockade. Only at one point is the line of cliff broken, by the coombe which rises obliquely below the rock-shelters. There is no trace of any earthwork where it enters the camp, but the possibility of an Iron Age entrance at this point cannot be ignored. The south-eastern part of the camp has been ruined by quarrying, but sufficient remains to show that the earthwork formerly ran for an indeterminate distance along the brow of the hill eastwards from the South Gate.

The camp therefore consisted originally of a bank and ditch which ran continuously round about two-thirds of the area; the remaining third was probably considered too strong to require elaborate artificial defences. Only to the north was it necessary to cover ground that was not naturally defensible, and the rampart was cleverly sited so as to reduce this length to a minimum, and only for a distance of about 400 yards, between the point where it swings eastwards above Patch Grove to its end just east of the north-east gate, does it cross gently sloping ground. It was here that, in their final form, the main strength of the defences was concentrated.

It would seem that the enormous area enclosed by the defences was dictated solely by the configuration of the ground. It was certainly not due to the requirements of an extensive permanent settlement, for of such settlement trenching on five selected sites within the camp revealed no trace. On the other hand, strong though it is, the builders would hardly have selected a site of such unwieldy dimensions had not other considerations guided their choice; nor are these hard to discover. Oldbury lies geologically just within the Weald, but is itself on the northern edge of the

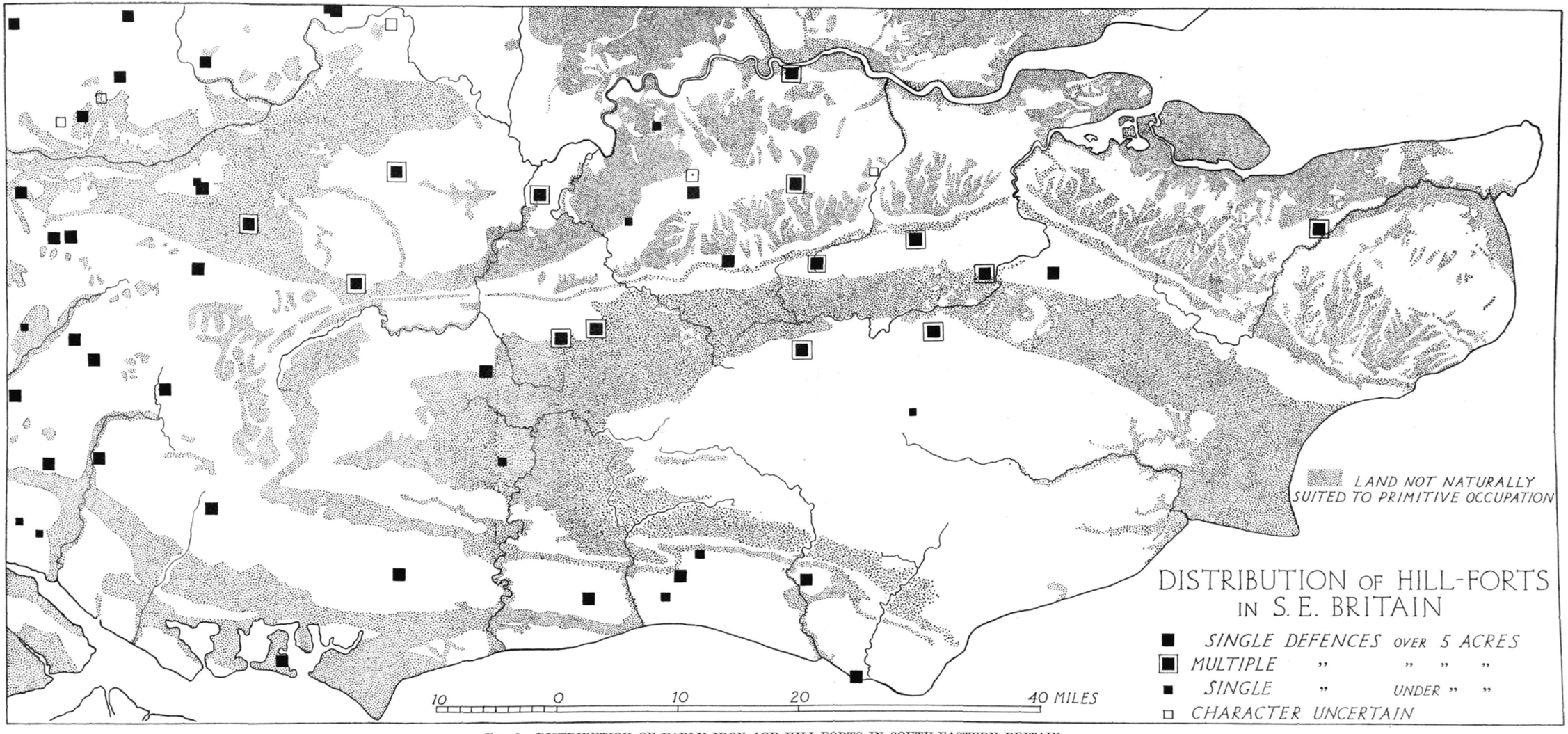

FIG. 2. DISTRIBUTION OF EARLY IRON AGE HILL-FORTS IN SOUTH-EASTERN BRITAIN.
(Prepared from unpublished material with the help of, and by kind permission of, the Geological Survey.)

Folkestone beds, the highest member of the Lower Greensand. Between this and the Chalk to the north lies a narrow band of heavy Gault Clay, while to the south, between the Folkestone and the Hythe beds, and the Tunbridge Wells sand and other deposits which form the centre of the Weald, lies another, wider band of clay with stoney seams, the Wealden Beds.

Of these formations the sand naturally carried a dry scrub which could easily be cleared ; whereas the clay, at any rate in the moister prehistoric periods, was covered with damp forest-land wholly unsuited for human settlement. Not until the Roman period is there evidence of any extensive movement into the clay-lands of the Weald. In the Early Iron Age settlement was automatically canalized into the lighter areas, and these ran east and west. Only at a very few points was there a possibility of easy transit from north to south. One of these was by water up the Medway, a fact attested by the amount of early settlement round Maidstone. Another route lay across Oldbury Hill. To the north less than three-quarters of a mile of Gault separated Oldbury from the Pilgrims' Way at the foot of the chalk ; while to the south, here, and here alone, the Weald Clay is capped by a series of lighter drift deposits, similar to those which cover the northern half of Oldbury Hill itself. These formed a natural corridor across the clay to the Medway-crossing at Tonbridge and, two miles beyond it, to the Iron Age camp on Castle Hill (Fig. 2). The significance of this route is discussed later. It is here sufficient to notice its relation to Oldbury.

It can hardly be doubted that the camp, whose gates were sited to the north and to the south, was deliberately placed where it would command this route. To this may be added two other factors, the great natural strength of Oldbury Hill and its proximity to the Medway Gap, the natural gateway into Wealden Kent from the north. Excavation has shown that Oldbury was first fortified by a non-Belgic people, almost certainly against the pressure of a Belgic population already settled less than ten miles away round Maidstone. In the light of its geographical position and of

the probable circumstances of its construction, the choice of the site of Oldbury needs no further explanation.

The Structure.

The structural history of the ramparts by which the camp was defended is extremely simple. They were originally erected as a single whole some time in the early first century A.D. The greater part of the camp was never altered; but very late in the pre-Roman Iron Age, almost certainly as a result of the Roman invasion, the North-East Gate and its associated earthworks were remodelled. There were thus two structural periods and these will be considered separately in the following sections.

I. First Period: the Erection of the Camp.

The main part of the surviving earthworks, from the South Gate and round the western side of the hill to the stream at the north end, undoubtedly forms a homogeneous unit. Apart from the cuttings made by the medieval road above Styant's Bottom, the earthwork is continuous between these two points, and its relation to the ground and its general form are throughout uniform. The small outer ditch found over the southern half of this length requires some consideration; but apart from this no feature was found, either before or during excavation, to suggest any complexity or development of structure. The results that were obtained from the intensive excavation of an area about the middle of this section above Styant's Bottom may, therefore, be applied with confidence to the rest of this rampart.

(*a*) *Site* 1. (Fig. 3.)

Site 1 lies in the woods immediately to the south of the Old Road, where trial excavation had revealed the presence of occupation-material in the body of the rampart. The ditch has at this point been mutilated in medieval and modern times and it was not therefore completely excavated. Two sections cut through the rampart showed, however, the

PLATE B. THE RAMPART, SITE I.
First period.

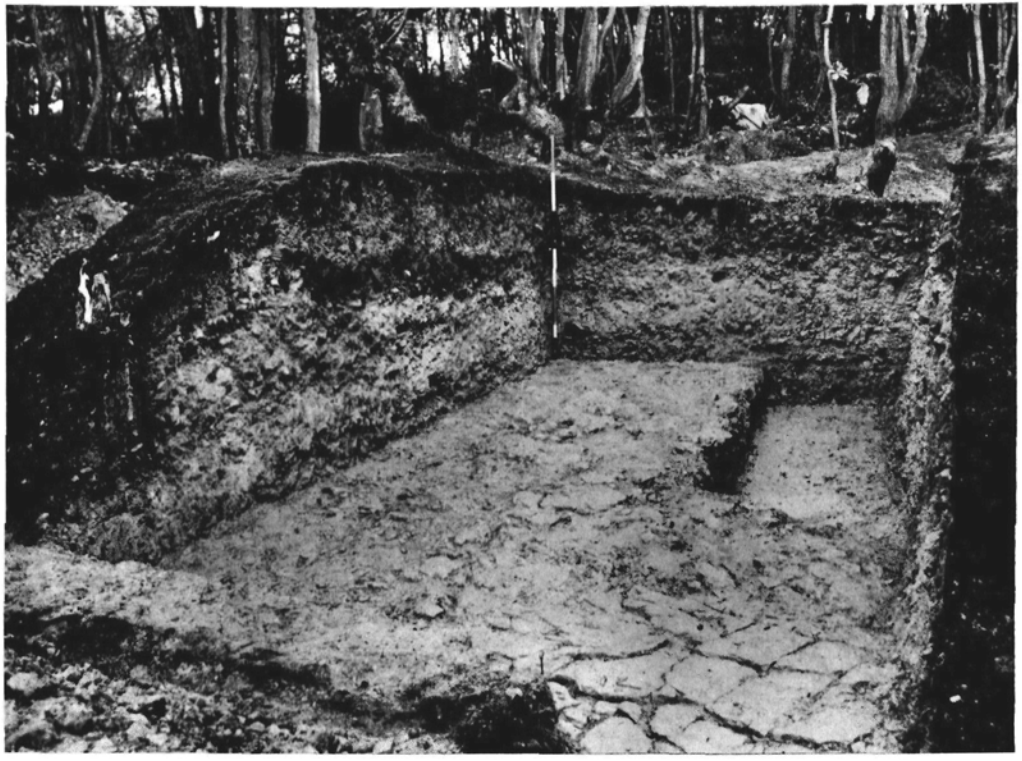

PLATE C. THE RAMPART, SITE I,
showing seam of dark earth which contained occupation-material : first period.

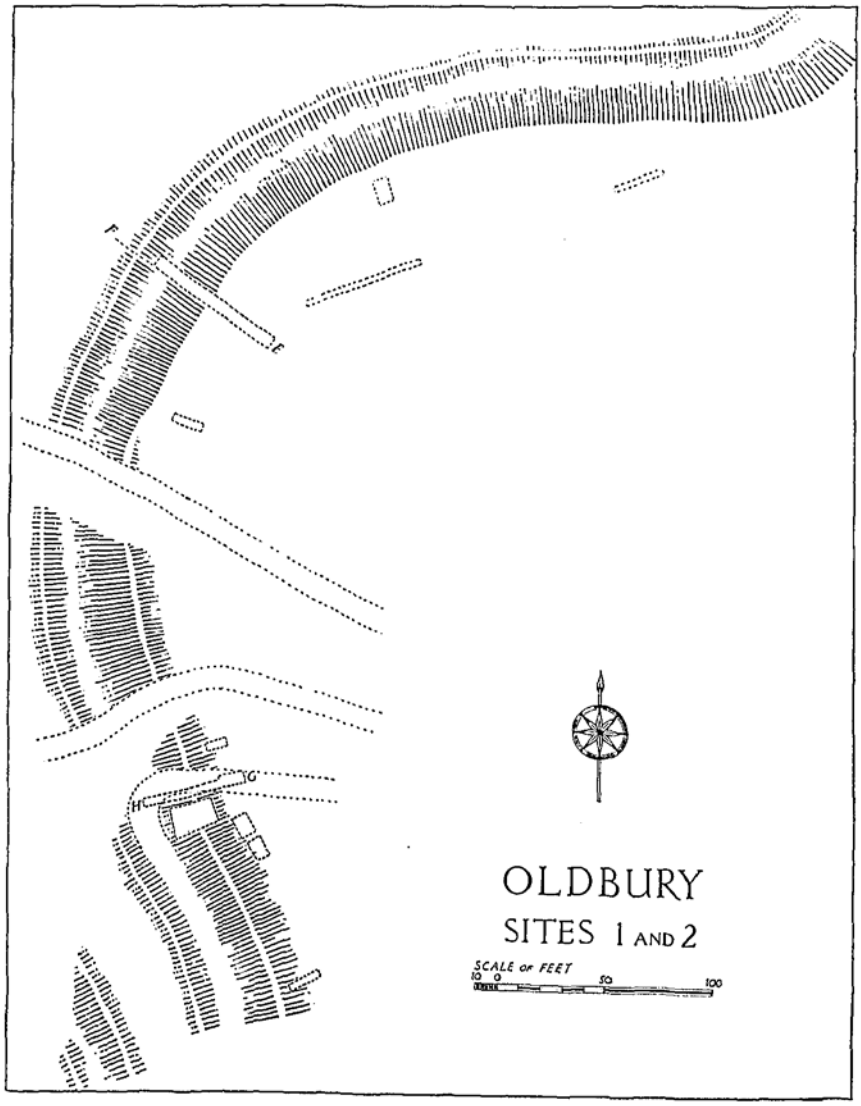

FIG. 3. SITES 1 AND 2.
THE RAMPART ABOVE STYANT'S BOTTOM.

manner of its construction and provided a considerable body of pottery for the dating of the work (see below, pp. 156-60).

The structure was of the simplest (see Fig. 6, section G—H). Heaps of earth taken from the ditch were piled one on top of another to form a bank, and to cap this further material was then added from behind the line of the rampart. A section 12 feet wide proved conclusively the absence of any postholes for a revetment. No signs of any palisade were found; but in view of the number of roots this evidence was hardly conclusive.

The occupation-material was all found in the dark streak visible in Plates B and C and Section G—H. This cannot be taken to indicate an accumulation of débris in the interval between two periods of construction. Such an accumulation would be most unlikely near the crest of the rampart; and the character of the dump, in which the dark matter shades imperceptibly off into clean tips of similar texture, and the unevenness of its deposit, show clearly that it represents redeposited rubbish from an earlier occupation-site. The brown layer by which it is capped represents the cleaner subsoil from the same scoop.

The character of the pottery from this occupation-débris is fully discussed below. Although it clearly provides only a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the rampart, several considerations suggest that it is in fact roughly contemporary with it. Not only is it of very similar character to the pottery found in the body of the rampart on Sites 2 and 3 and in the rapid silt of the ditch on Site 2, but it is itself of so late a date within the Iron Age that the rampart can hardly be dated much later without unduly telescoping the subsequent history of the site. Other considerations, discussed below, do in fact suggest that it may well represent the occupation-rubbish of one of the gangs employed in the construction of the rampart.

A number of trenches were cut in and behind the tail of the rampart at Site 1 and to the south of it. These revealed in a few cases sporadic traces of occupation, including the complete vessel illustrated (Fig. 13, no. 1), but no signs of any structure or of any permanent settlement.

(*b*) *Site* 2. (FIG. 3.)

Immediately to the north of Site 1, on the other side of the Old Road, the rampart makes a sharp inward kink following the contour of the hill.

The area within the bend would have been sheltered from the north and west by the rampart, and from the east by the main bulk of the hill, and it was therefore well suited for prehistoric occupation. Extensive trenching, however, failed to reveal any signs of settlement, in contrast to three cuttings on the line of the rampart, all of which produced scattered sherds of pottery.

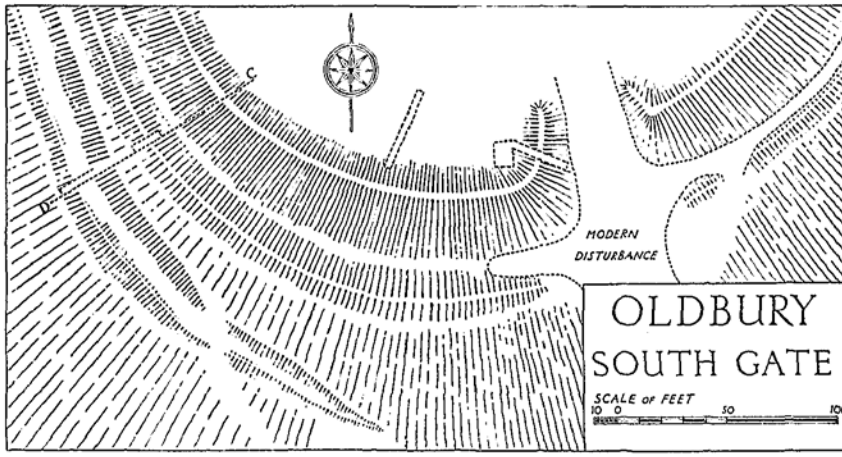

FIG. 4. SITE 3. THE SOUTH GATE (p. 146).

Superficially there is no sign of any bank at this point, but a section through rampart and ditch (Section E—F) revealed plainly that, though deliberately destroyed, the former is still in fact standing some 4 feet high. The present level surface has been produced by the accumulation of earth ploughed from the higher ground in the centre of the camp. As on Site 1, the rampart itself consists simply of featureless dumps of earth. The quantities of burnt ash-like material found wherever the rampart was trenched on this site represent perhaps the burning of wood and bracken when the site was first cleared; they contained only scattered sherds of pottery. The ditch is of steeply cut, V-shaped

section with a small counterscarp bank. Despite the simplicity of construction the steep slope of the bank and ditch crowning a considerable natural hill must have been a formidable defence. As in all primitive bank-and-ditch construction the important feature is the ditch.

Sherds of four pots were found in the rapidly laid silt of the ditch and of half a dozen others in the body of the bank. In character they approximate to those from the body of the rampart on Site 1.

(c) *Site* 3. (FIG. 4.)

The site of the South Gate was destroyed some fifteen years ago when the track leading from Seven Wents to the top of the hill was widened and deepened. The existence of an original gate at this point is, however, attested by the inturn of the rampart on the west side. That on the east side also seems to have inturned, but it has been badly mutilated. A section (J—K) through the inturned bank on the west side revealed the same dump-construction as in the main rampart on Sites 1 and 2. The uppermost tip consisted of heavy stone blocks, but these were treated by the builders merely as so much dump-material, and there was no attempt to build a wall-face. A trench at the junction of the main rampart and of the inturned bank confirmed that the two were thrown up simultaneously and that the inturned entrance belongs therefore to the primary lay-out of the camp.

The outer ditch was also sectioned near the southern entrance (Section C—D) and proved to be of shallow, but sharply-cut, V-shaped section. It runs from a point immediately to the west of the South Gate as far as the slope above Styant's Bottom where it is lost in a quarry beside the Old Road; 80 yards to the north of this point it is no longer found. It conforms throughout its length to the line of the inner rampart and there is no reason to believe that it is not in fact contemporary. Several other camps in the neighbourhood exhibit the same doubling of the rampart at weak points, notably that in Squerryes Park, Westerham (for a plan see *Arch. Cant.*, XVI, 136) which has several

PLATE D. GENERAL VIEW OF THE NORTH-EAST GATE.

The survey-poles mark, from left to right (i) the nose of the early bank, (ii) the end of the early ditch, (iii) a post-hole of the early gate, (iv) a post-hole of the later gate.

features in common with Oldbury. In general it is evident that the original builders of Oldbury were working upon a basis of common-sense and upon a general knowledge of bank-and-ditch hill-forts elsewhere. This is apparent both in the rudimentary form of the rampart itself and in the manner in which the counterscarp bank appears and disappears as the slope occasions. The doubling of the bank at Oldbury only along the highest part of the hill is at first sight curious ; but it must be remembered that it was on this side only that the camp faced open, habitable country, from which it was most liable to attack.

Lying upon the first tip of the inturned bank, and sealed by the later tips, was a cooking-hearth. Scattered sherds were also found here and in the main bank ; but once more there were no signs of occupation behind the rampart nor along the presumed line of the road leading from the entrance into the interior of the camp.

(*d*) *Site* 4. (Fig. 5.)

In its present form the rampart that crosses the neck of comparatively level ground at the northern end of the camp belongs to a later period than the rest of the earthwork. It superseded, however, an earlier and simpler structure, of which the remains underlie the present rampart. This consisted once more of a simple bank and ditch, but owing in part perhaps to the gentle slope of the ground, which called for a specially strong artificial defence, in part to the material here to hand, solid layers of rock with partings of sand, the rampart was of a somewhat more elaborate construction. The top sand from the ditch was first dumped on the nose of the bank, and on it and behind it was laid a massive core of stones. This core sloped backwards to a kerb of heavy blocks which were bedded into the original surface soil, and in front it was brought to a roughly built face. Up against this face was heaped sand, and the whole must originally have been to some extent roughly revetted with stone.

The original gateway lay a few feet to the south of the second-period gate. The solid causeway across the early

ditch had been largely destroyed by the construction of the wide secondary ditch, but the stump of it was clearly visible underlying the later bank (Pl. D). This causeway evidently ran obliquely to the line of the defences, for there is a considerable overlap between the ends of the primary ditch on either side. Whether the original gateway was itself also set obliquely is not certain. The base of one post-hole was found underlying the later bank (see plan), but it was not clear at which side of the early gate it lay.

No sign of the other post was found to the north-west on the line of the existing roadway; but continual use has here worn the road surface at least two feet below the original ground level. Alternatively it may have lain to the south-east beneath the existing bank. Time did not permit the excavation necessary to determine this point, nor was it possible to discover whether the original bank inturned here, as at the South Gate.

The original rampart did not apparently run the full length of the northern sector. In a cutting some 100 feet to the west of the North-east Gate the primary ditch was found carefully filled by the builders of the secondary earthwork. 100 feet farther again to the west, however, no trace of it was found; and unless the original rampart made some extraordinary deviation between these two points, it follows that it covered only a distance of some 150 feet on either side of the entrance. The explanation of this is presumably to be sought in the geological situation of the camp. At this point it faced directly upon the Gault Clay, which must have been virtually impassable save where deliberately cleared and metalled. It was evidently necessary to fortify only a limited stretch of ground on either side of the track. No doubt also the valley of the stream which separates the two sectors of the earthwork itself constituted a formidable marshy barrier.

A certain amount of pottery was found in the silting of the primary ditch and in general this corroborates the evidence obtained from Sites 1-3. No occupation was found behind the rampart nor on the slopes facing the stream near the point where it leaves the camp.

PLATE E. THE NORTH-EAST GATE FROM THE CREST OF THE INNER RAMPART, showing the remains of the deep, early ditch underlying the broad, shallow, later ditch. The further figure stands at the outer end of the outwork, the nearer figure on the causeway of the later entrance.

II. Second Period: Reconstruction of the North-east Gate.

The greater part of the earthwork seems to have remained in the condition in which it was first constructed until the time of its final abandonment. The northern sector was, however, at a later date drastically remodelled. It is a natural inference that the reconstruction was undertaken in the face of some danger expected from the north; and the material finds associated with the rebuilding of the rampart make it almost certain that the occasion was in fact the invasion of Britain by Claudius's armies in A.D. 43. It was by way of the North Downs that the Romans marched on the Belgic kingdoms north of the Thames. The tribes of Wealden Kent, which lay well off the main line of advance, would have had ample time for preparation. The fact that in this case the North-east Gate only was refortified corroborates the suggestion, made above (p. 148), that the uncleared Gault Clay on either side of the road constituted barrier sufficient to prevent any danger of flanking attacks from other directions.

The refortification consisted of the reconstruction of the existing bank and ditch and the addition of an outwork in front of the entrance. At the same time, the gateway was rebuilt upon a slightly different alignment (see Fig. 5).

Perhaps the most singular feature of the refortification is the ditch. This consists of a wide, shallow, flat-bottomed depression of no obvious defensive value. The original ditch was deliberately filled. In Section A—B (Fig. 6) the filling was necessitated by the elimination from the revised plan of the slight overlap which had existed between the ditches of the earlier entrance; this involved bringing the rampart on the east side of the gate slightly forward across the line of the earlier ditch. But in a section cut to the west of the entrance no such re-alignment took place. The rampart has here been in part destroyed by recent quarrying, but it is evident that the line of the earlier ditch lay well forward of the later bank, and here too it was deliberately filled. Flat-bottomed ditches of this form do

not seem previously to have been recorded in this country during the Iron Age. Recently, however, Dr. Wheeler has found an identical form of defence in the late pre-Cæsarian Belgic camps of Seine Inférieure, and in the context it is probably legitimate to trace a connection between this group and Oldbury.

At the same time as the ditch was remodelled the early bank was strengthened. The main features of this work are clearly seen in Section A—B, although it must be remembered that it was probably here only that the builders found it necessary to extend their bank forward over the line of the early ditch. Elsewhere they probably followed the obvious course of dumping the additional material on top of, and behind, the early bank. A modern quarry immediately to the west of the gate does in fact reveal such a dump of earth overlying the tail of the stone core of the earlier bank.

Three features of structural significance are revealed in the section—a large post-hole slightly in the rear of the crest, a sloping revetting-wall some 8-10 feet in front of the post-hole, and a mass of tumbled stone spread down the forward face of the bank. The post-hole and the revetting wall are, from their relation to the uniform tip of sandy earth which they supported, undoubtedly contemporary, and together they formed an additional defensive feature on the crest of the main bank. The precise character of the mass of stone, which was found lying down the slope of the bank, is less easily determined. Its uniform spread down the whole length of the bank and the absence of any noticeably heavier accumulation at the foot at first suggest that it constituted a peliberate revetment. Against this, however, is the absence of any signs of coursing in what has superficially every appearance of naturally tumbled masonry. Such a revetment must, moreover, inevitably have been covered with earth if it was to stay in position and was not to provide ammunition and an easy means of scaling the bank to any enemy; and of such a covering there is no trace beneath the obviously silted accumulation of small stones at the foot of the bank. It is probable, therefore, that in part at least this mass of stones represents masonry fallen from the

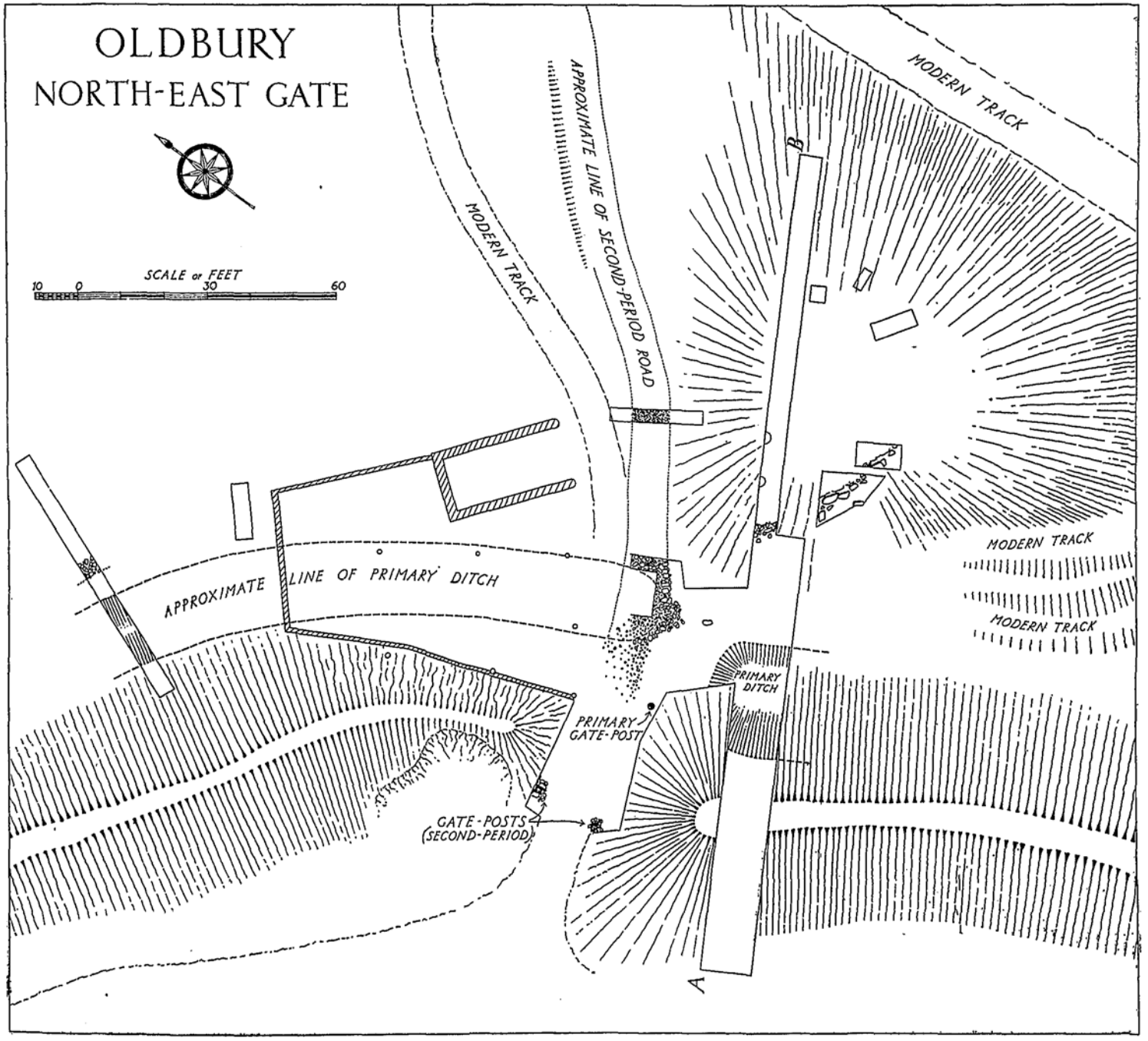

FIG. 5. PLAN OF THE NORTH-EAST GATE.
Diagonal shading indicates modern farm-building.

revetment at the crest of the bank. It cannot, however, by any means all be so explained. The slope of the upper revetment and the character of its masonry, which diminishes in size from the bottom upwards, alike show that it can originally hardly have stood more than about 3-4 feet higher than it does at present, and this would be insufficient to account for the volume of fallen material. Moreover, while many of the stones were found to lie in loose dark surface-earth, a certain number were undoubtedly bedded in the solid brown body of the rampart, in places, e.g. just in front of the foot of the revetment, in sufficient numbers and sufficiently carefully laid to suggest deliberate revetment. It seems clear that the builders of the bank did in places finish it off with a capping of stones, and this capping would no doubt have held up much of the upper revetment when it came to collapse. How many of the stones are in place, how many are fallen from above, it is, in view of the action of roots, probably useless to enquire.

In front of the ditch lay an elaborate outwork. In the form in which it is seen in Section A—B (Fig. 6) it perhaps covered only the area immediately outside the entrance. Immediately to the west of this all trace has been destroyed by modern farm-buildings ; but the remains of stone-walling were traceable above the counterscarp of the ditch. Farther to the west no trace of such stonework was found. The whole of the area immediately outside the ditch has here been heavily ploughed, and the absence of any trace of a bank is not therefore conclusive evidence that no such bank ever existed. It is, however, more likely that it was restricted to the immediate vicinity of the road, and the swing of the field boundary a little to the west may well roughly represent the original edge of this outer bank.

A 6-foot section through the bank showed it to be a low mound of earth, nowhere more than 4 feet high, bounded originally at either edge by a stone revetting wall. An unexplained feature was the depression immediately behind the outermost wall. This depression, which was apparently a consistent feature, was filled with earth and stones and roughly levelled over with heavy stone blocks. A small

shelf of ironstone *in situ* seems to have carried the outermost wall.[1] The filling contained a quantity of pottery, but there was no indication that the hole had stood open after the bank was complete. It may have been the trench for a heavy timber breastwork, but it is hard to see why in that case post-holes were not dug in the ordinary manner. Two such post-holes were found towards the inner edge of the bank and others no doubt existed, but were not found owing to the insufficient width of the section-trench.

Immediately to the South-east of the section, trial holes were cut to discover further traces of palisading. These unexpectedly showed that, contrary to the surface indications, the inner revetment here swung sharply away from the axis of the ditch and the outwork presumably ended a short distance beyond. The ground originally sloped much more sharply to the east than at present and the inner edge of the bank was carefully revetted with slabs of ironstone laid against the sloping side and packed in place with clay.

Inserted into the slope of the bank at this point were two cremation burials in cordoned Belgic vessels (Fig. 16). Both had been shattered and displaced by the roots of a large hazel. But it is certain that they were not in place when the bank was built, and they provide, therefore, a valuable *terminus ante quem* for its construction. The presence of burnt bone in close association with either pot indicates two burials rather than one.

The line of approach to the gateway seems to have run straight through the middle of the outwork. Later levelling has considerably altered the ground along the line of the modern road, and only 65 feet out from the gateway the Iron Age road surface was found under 4 feet of deposited material. It consisted of light metalling laid upon a natural layer of ironstone and was heading straight out from the gate towards a field track, which is itself a parish boundary and may well represent the line of the prehistoric road. Inwards towards the gate the road surface sloped sharply upwards across the

[1] Immediately to the south-east no trace of the undisturbed ironstone was found, its place being taken by heavy dumped stones. Further excavation is obviously a necessity if its exact character is to be determined.

PLATE F. SOCKET OF GATE-POST OF THE NORTH-EAST GATEWAY.
Second period.

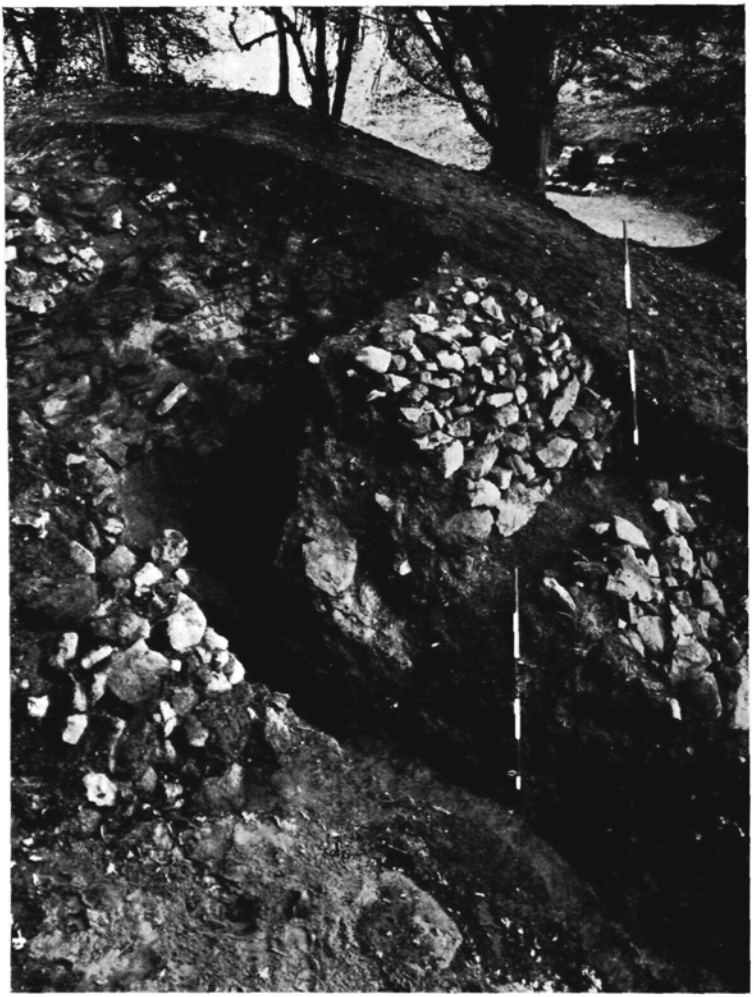

PLATE G. THE REBUILT RAMPART BY THE NORTH-EAST GATE, showing the revetment near the crest. The lower survey-pole marks the nose of the earlier bank. In the background a post-hole of the later gate.

end of the ditch of the earlier defences, and was carried at this point upon an elaborately buttressed causeway of heavy stone blocks metalled with lighter stone. In the gateway itself later traffic has worn away all traces of Iron Age metalling, but the sockets of the two gate-posts are preserved on either side, slightly in rear of the crest of the rampart. That on the north-western side (Pl. F) is the more massive and originally contained a well-squared timber balk; the other evidently carried a lighter post and is set very slightly in rear of the axis of the first. The total span is 14 feet, and the gate was presumably swung upon the heavier of the two posts. No trace was found of any central socket.

The reconstruction of the north-eastern defences could be well dated in terms of the large body of pottery found stratified in the body of the rampart and of the outwork. In sharp contrast to the material from the silting of the primary ditch, it contained a considerable proportion of Belgic material and several sherds of imported fabrics, among them two fragments of Roman mortaria. It also contained a fragment of a rotary quern. The extent to which continental fabrics were reaching this country before the Claudian conquest varies from place to place; but it is in the highest degree improbable that they reached Wealden Kent much, if at all, before A.D. 43. On the other hand, the historical probabilities and the scarcity of Roman material are against a refortification after that date. Even if the Romans did not immediately attack the Wealden area, the position of Oldbury on the flank of Watling Street must very soon afterwards have called for attention. Over forty sling-stones were found on the forward slope of the inner rampart in the 12-foot section cleared; and not only was the road-metalling in front of the gate reddened by fire, but the great gate-post had itself been burnt. It is perhaps not straining the evidence unduly to suggest that the camp was in fact sacked by the enemy against whom it had been refortified. In any case, the refortification can be dated with some confidence to within a year or two of A.D. 43.

As the excavation of this area was somewhat curtailed by the international crisis of September 1938, it is probably

worth while indicating the respects in which it was left incomplete. The second gate-post and any other structure of the early gate may lie under the later bank, and could be fairly easily recovered. The outwork was also incompletely explored. In particular the line of revetting on its inner face seems to contradict the surface indications, which suggest a greater extension to the south-east; and the peculiar pit, found in the section near the outer edge, also calls for explanation. To the north-west of the modern track, it is doubtful whether any sufficient trace of the original work remains to make excavation worth while. It is, in fact, almost entirely upon detailed points of structure that the work was left incomplete.

Traces of Settlement outside the Ramparts by Patch Grove.

Within the area of the ramparts no traces of permanent occupation were found despite extensive trenching on no less than five selected sites (see Fig. 1)—in the shelter of the ramparts above Styant's Bottom, within each of the two gates, on either side of the spring in the centre of the camp, and on the slopes facing the stream near the northern rampart. Over an area of 123 acres such trenching does not, of course, disprove the existence of prehistoric settlement, but it certainly limits its possible extent; and it may in fact well be that Oldbury was never permanently occupied.

Extensive traces of occupation were, on the other hand, found less than 200 yards outside the ramparts to the north-west, in the marshy valley below Patch Grove (see Fig. 1). In 1906 the present owner, Mr. H. A. Hooker, excavated a swimming-pool at this point and on that occasion the late Benjamin Harrison observed and recorded the occurrence of large quantities of pottery (MS. notes in the possession of Sir Edward Harrison and *Arch. Cant.*, XLV, 153-4). Trial trenches confirmed this record and a great deal of late pre-Roman and Roman pottery was found, water-laid in the re-deposited clay which here overlies the valley bottom: without doubt the rubbish from a

considerable settlement. The site of this settlement was found immediately to the south-east, on the gravel at the foot of the north-westerly slopes of Oldbury Hill but time and weather did not permit its further examination.[1] A short distance up-stream the earlier deposits were sealed by a rough metalling associated with second century Roman pottery, probably a farm track similar to that which now runs down the valley. Fragments of Roman brick indicate the former existence of some substantial building, but of this no further trace was found. For the extensive Roman remains in this neighbourhood see *Arch. Cant.*, L (1938), 156.

Farther up the same valley the owner in 1909 " laid pipes from a spring by the top of Styant's Bottom hill to a reservoir (cattle trough) dug at the 400 feet level in the valley. Here in the excavations an immense quantity of Celtic and Roman sherds was lighted on, and the earth and stones were reddened by fierce heat." (From a letter written in 1912 by Benjamin Harrison.) The site referred to is apparently in the north-east corner of the 25-inch sheet Kent XL, 3, $1\frac{5}{8}$ in. west of the east margin of the sheet and $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. south of the north margin. A single trial hole dug a few yards away, at the nearest point where permission to dig could be obtained, yielded nothing.

The earliest pottery found on the Patch Grove site was undoubtedly pre-Roman in character (see below, p. 175-78), but in point of time it might equally well belong to the years immediately following the conquest. The Patch Grove settlement is not therefore necessarily contemporary with the fortifications of Oldbury; its establishment may rather coincide with the dislocation which here marked the establishment of Roman rule. On the other hand, in the absence of any considerable permanent Iron Age occupation of Oldbury, such dislocation may well have been very limited. The lack of close stratification in water-laid deposits of rubbish, the upper levels of which contained also Roman pottery, left this point undecided, and it could only be determined by

[1] A plan of the work done has been deposited for reference and record at Maidstone Museum. The only structural features calling for comment were the traces of two sleeper-beams and a cobbled floor.

further excavation on the site of the settlement itself. In the absence of this we cannot be certain whether the Patch Grove settlement belonged originally to one of the scattered communities which were responsible for the building and maintenance of Oldbury, or whether it was first founded after the Roman conquest.

The Date and Significance of the Earthworks.

The date assignable to the construction of the original defences depends upon two factors, the stratigraphical relation of these works to the later re-fortification and the character of the associated pottery. In Section A—B (Fig. 6) it will be seen that a comparatively small quantity of silt had accumulated at the bottom of the primary ditch before it was superseded by the reconstructed earthwork. This is a criterion to be used with caution; but the loose character of the sand, of which the rampart was largely composed, was in fact amply demonstrated during the course of the excavation. Silting is, moreover, notoriously far more rapid in the early years after the construction of any earthwork; and it is therefore reasonable to conclude that the primary ditch stood open only for a very limited period of time, a period to be measured perhaps even in years rather than decades.

The pottery presents a more complex problem. Its most noticeable characteristic is the disparity between the groups associated with each of the two structural periods. The later phase is predominantly Belgic in character. It contains inevitably some sherds reminiscent of the earlier period, but the percentage is surprisingly small. Of the remainder, those sufficiently determinate for identification are almost exclusively Belgic (see below, pp. 173-77, Figs. 14-16) and they belong moreover to the latter part of the pre-Roman Belgic period. With the exception, however, of the two sherds of imported Roman mortaria they contain no Roman material; and quite apart from the improbability that fortifications such as these would have been erected after A.D. 43-4, it is most unlikely that pedestal urns such as Fig. 16, nos. 1 and 2, which were shown to post-date the

OLDBURY

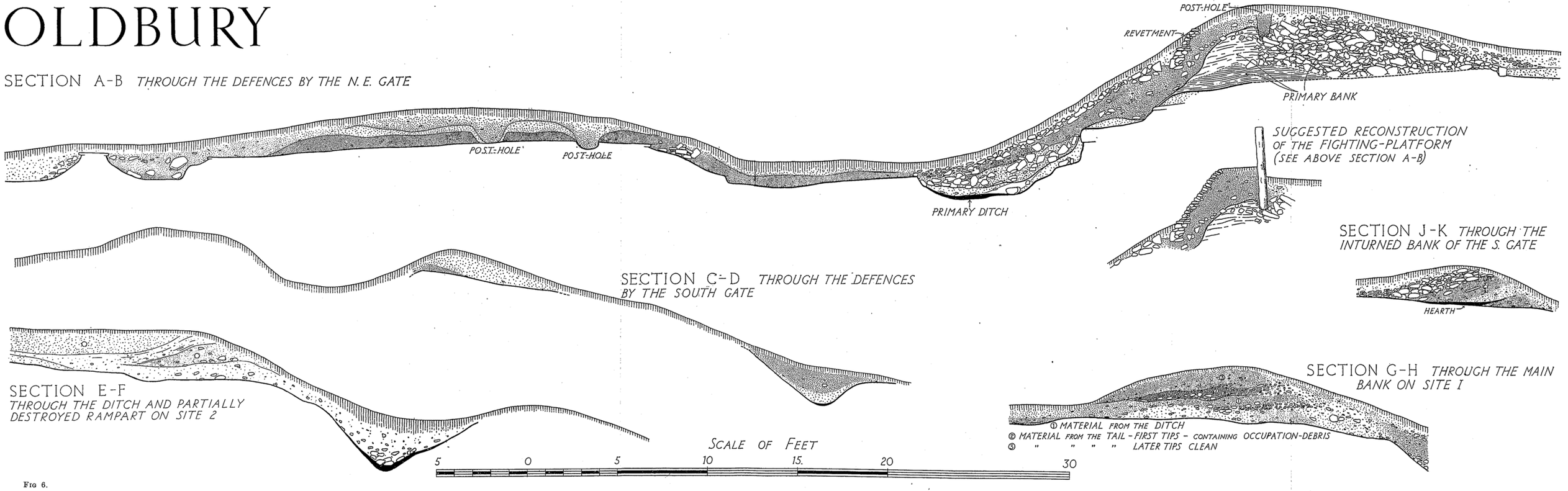

Fig 6.

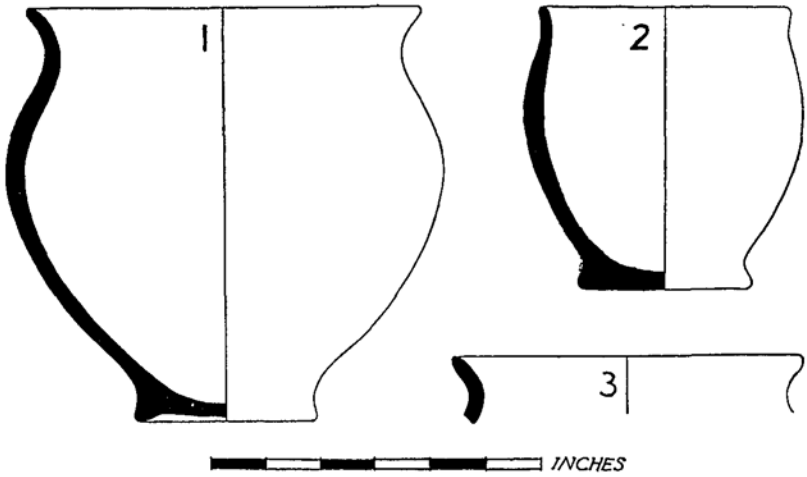

FIG. 7. FOOT-RING BOWLS.

No. 1. From Caburn.
No. 2. From Hascombe.
No. 3. From Saxonbury.

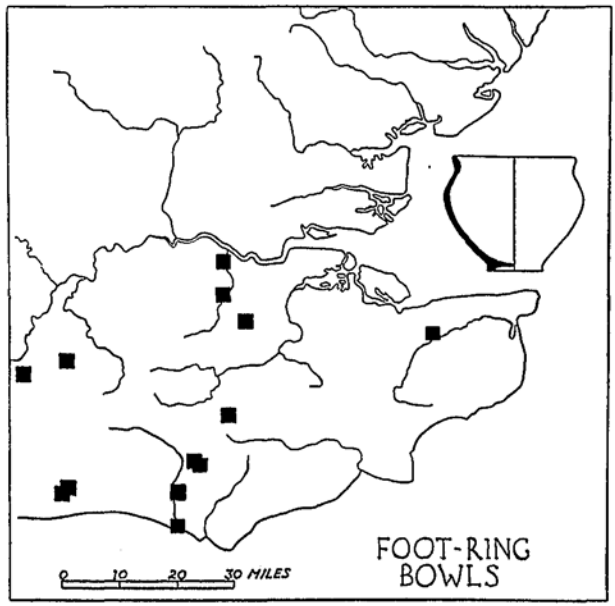

FIG. 8. DISTRIBUTION OF FOOT-RING BOWLS.

reconstruction of the fortifications, were in use for any considerable period after the Roman conquest. The pottery evidence is, in fact, fully consistent with the date, A.D. *c.* 43, suggested above (p. 153) for the refortification of Oldbury.

The strongly Belgic character of the pottery associated with the later defences serves only to emphasize the absence of a single sherd of recognizably Belgic fabric from the earlier material. A comparison of the two groups points unmistakably to the conclusion that while the original rampart was the work of a non-Belgic people, by the time it was rebuilt in A.D. 43 the original builders had passed under Belgic domination. It suggests also that Belgic pressure in some form may have been the occasion which prompted the erection of Oldbury.

The positive character of this earlier, non-Belgic culture is, however, less easily determined. The pottery associated with the primary rampart is remarkably uniform (Fig. 13). It includes a certain number of coarser vessels in rough corky ware of the Iron Age A tradition; but the majority of the finer and more distinctive pots are of a highly burnished brown or black fabric, in several cases wheel-turned. The introduction of the potter's wheel into this country is generally associated with the Belgæ, and it is in any case unlikely that it anywhere preceded the Belgic invasion. There is, however, no reason why an invention already widespread on the continent should not have found its way into this country by a variety of routes, in particular by way of Sussex, the non-Belgic continental affinities of whose late pre-Roman cultures are becoming increasingly apparent. The fact, therefore, that the potter's wheel was already in use when the fortification of Oldbury was first undertaken, while it is probably a sound criterion of late date, is not necessarily an indication of Belgic influence. It should rather be attributed to the same sources as the other elements visible in this earliest Oldbury group.

Most of the recognizable vessels belong to a form already recognized in Kent at Crayford (*Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, IV, 1938, 163; Fig. 9, nos. 1-4). They were there described as "squat pedestal-vessels", but they would possibly better

be termed " foot-ring bowls ". The base is not in every case a true foot-ring, but the term avoids confusion with the more familiar Belgic pedestal-vessels. The rim section of these foot-ring bowls is S-curved but otherwise featureless, while the base ranges from a small, but well-defined, pedestal to a mere beading. The form is not striking but it is consistent; and taken in conjunction with the ware it is sufficiently distinctive to serve as a cultural type-fossil.

Vessels of this form and ware have been found on a variety of sites in and on the edge of the Weald. Of the northern and central Wealden sites, Holmbury and Saxonbury (Fig. 7, no. 3) are represented only by fragmentary examples, but the ware of these is so strikingly similar to that of the first period at Oldbury that the identification is reasonably certain. The Hascombe pot (Fig. 7, no. 2) is a crude, lumpy derivative, which may be compared with one found in the rapidly laid silt of the primary ditch at Oldbury (Fig. 14, no. 1). At Bigberry, portions of several such pots were found. These belong to a pre-Belgic cultural substratum that is strongly represented on this site. Its precise significance is far from clear; but taken in conjunction with the wide diffusion in Kent of the earliest continental coinage it suggests far closer contacts between East and West Kent than are visible in the later pre-Roman period. Elsewhere in Kent complete vessels have been found at Hulbury and at Crayford. In both cases they represent an element intrusive upon the established Iron Age A population, and in the context they may fairly be regarded as the result of intercourse between the northern Weald and the Thames Estuary by way of the Darent valley.

To the south, foot-ring bowls have been found on a number of Early Iron Age sites in Sussex. The evidence has recently been re-examined by Mr. Hawkes[1] (" The Caburn Pottery and its Implications ", *Sussex Arch. Colls.*, 80, 1939, pp. 217-62), who regards the foot-ring bowl (in its earlier forms, with a well-developed pedestal) as typical of an

[1] In addition to the great deal of help that Mr. Hawkes has given me elsewhere in the preparation of this report, I am particularly indebted to him for allowing me, under very difficult circumstances, to see the page-proof of his article.

intrusive continental culture which established itself in the west central Sussex downlands during the third century B.C. At Park Brow a single sherd only of this ware was found on the site of the first settlement, in marked contrast to the second settlement where similar vessels were common. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that the people responsible for the sharp dislocation of life in this settlement were also responsible for the introduction of this distinctive fabric. Two further points may be noticed in connection with this site and with the neighbouring site in Findon Park. Firstly, as Mr. Hawkes emphasizes, the attribution of this invasion to the third century B.C. rests on good evidence; and secondly, in the long period between the third century and the Roman conquest the characteristic pottery-type inevitably underwent modification. The earliest form, well attested for example at Park Brow, had a well-defined pedestal. With the passage of time, however, this became increasingly rudimentary, and it ended up as the characteristic foot-ring of the Wealden foot-ring bowl.

From its first home, in the strip of downland whose centre is Cissbury, this intrusive culture spread in two directions—eastwards along the Downs beyond Lewes, where it became fused with the strong local Iron Age A culture, and north-eastwards up into the Weald, which now probably for the first time became a centre of iron-working for the surrounding territories and in particular for Sussex.

The idea of a specifically Wealden culture is perhaps sufficiently novel to call for additional comment. This seems to be due to two factors, both of them geological. In the first place the heavy clay-lands did undoubtedly exclude settlement from large areas of the Weald; and secondly, even in those areas where settlement was possible, the soil is so acid that it inevitably destroys much of the evidence of human occupation. No single fragment of iron, of bronze, or of unburnt bone was found during the excavations at Oldbury; and similar conditions no doubt account for the complete absence of Iron Age objects made of these materials from other sites in an area where occupation is securely attested by the existence of a number of earthworks. Much

of the possible evidence of human occupation has vanished beyond hope of recovery. There remain only the earthworks themselves, the pottery, the coinage in precious metals and a few miscellaneous items such as glass beads.

A full report on the coinage in relation to finds from other Kentish sites will be given by Mr. Derek Allen in *Archæologia* (forthcoming). Five Iron Age coins are recorded from Oldbury. These consist, first, of two which were recovered by Mr. Hooker when driving a road up the hillside through the site of the S. gate in 1923. One of these is a stater of the type attributed to the Gaulish tribe of the Bellovaci, the other a quarter-stater of the same type. Both of these gold coins are worn and it is suggested by Dr. Brooke, "The Philippus in the West and the Belgic Invasions of Britain" (*Numismatic Chronicle* (1933), pp. 88-138), that they were imported to this country in the period immediately preceding the first Belgic penetration. A second stater of the same type belonged to Mr. Benjamin Harrison and is now in the possession of his son. It is uncertain whether this was found at Oldbury. It may be one of three mentioned in one of the former's letters to George Payne. The fourth coin and the fifth may have been coins of the Atrebates and so connected with the period of the secondary Belgic penetration at the time of Cæsar's wars. The whole series, as Mr. Allen says, therefore "belongs to the earlier period of Celtic coinage in Britain". There is, however, reason to believe that in the Weald these types may have continued in circulation long after they were obsolete elsewhere.

The only significant beads are of a distinctive type with inlaid spirals of differently coloured glass (see below, p. 162, Fig. 9, nos. 1-3). One was found at Oldbury itself; another at Westerham, near the site of the next camp to the west on the greensand belt; and a third in Sussex near Eastbourne. A fourth was found N.W. of New Romney but may have been brought there in historic times (*Arch. Cant.*, L, 1938, p. 154). Beads of the same general type, though usually with more pronounced bosses, are not unfamiliar on the continent, but no exact analogies seem to

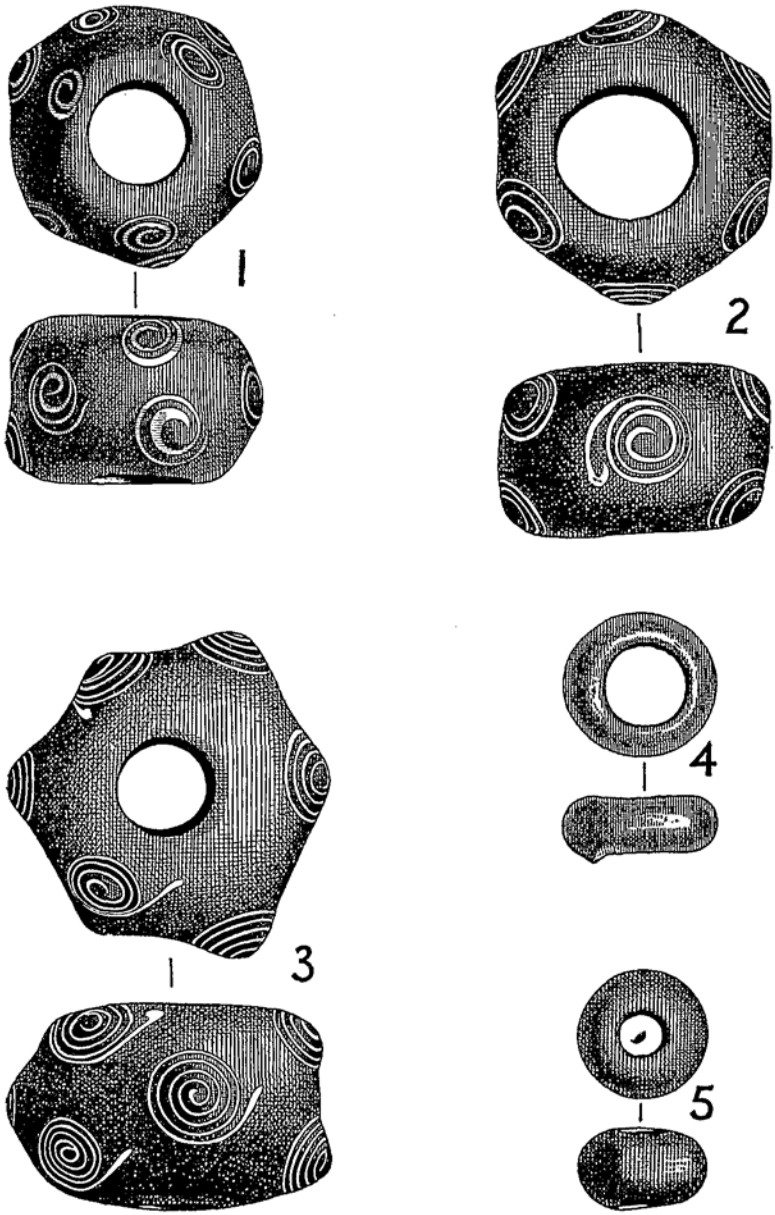

FIG. 9. GLASS BEADS. (See pp. 180-1.)

Nos. 1, 4 and 5 from Oldbury.
No. 2 from Westerham.
No. 3 from Eastbourne.

have been recorded elsewhere in England. The occurrence, therefore, of identical specimens in Sussex and in the northern Weald is good evidence of contact between the two areas.

The earthworks of Kent and Surrey lie, with few exceptions, either near the Thames or on one of the open greensand stretches of the Weald (see Fig. 2). Of the latter group four only (Oldbury, Holmbury, Hascombe and Saxonbury) have yielded pottery, and in each case this includes fragments of foot-ring bowls. The evidence, therefore, though limited, suggests a considerable unity of culture throughout the greensand series of camps. There is also reason to believe that most, if not all, are relatively late.[1] A number of them have multiple defences. The outer lines are in some cases very rudimentary, as at Oldbury. But the recent researches of Dr. Wheeler in Wessex and in France have shown that the multiplication of defences in any form is apparently confined to the last century and a half before the Roman conquest of Britain; and although the whole question of multiple earthworks in south-eastern Britain requires further study, it is already clear that the primary centre for their diffusion in this country lies in the south-west, and that multiple earthworks elsewhere are liable to be relatively late. It is also clear that few of the Wealden camps were intended for permanent occupation.[2] They were, like Oldbury, centres of refuge for a large scattered population; and it is a reasonable assumption that they also were erected in time of stress in response to some external danger. What that danger was it would perhaps be unwise to speculate.

The evidence for a specifically Wealden Iron Age culture is limited, but it is, as far as it goes, consistent. It

[1] A possible exception is the earthwork at Boughton Monchelsea. Its form is unusual; and its situation near Maidstone and discoveries of early material in the immediate neighbourhood both suggest the possibility of a date rather earlier than that of the rest of the series.

[2] With the exception of Saxonbury, which is structurally unique and appears to have been held in connection with the working of the local iron-mines, none of these camps has produced evidence of continuous occupation. At Dry Hill, Lingfield, extensive excavations yielded only a number of slingstones.

remains, however, to set it in its proper perspective by a brief examination of the other early Iron Age cultures that have been recorded[1] from western Kent.

The majority of recorded finds from this area belong to the later part of the pre-Roman Iron Age. One site alone, Hulbury, has produced specifically Iron Age A pottery (Fig. 11). It belongs to a group of pottery decorated with finger-tip impressions, which is well represented in the Thames valley and in the coastal regions of Essex[2]; but in the absence of other contemporary finds in western Kent it is impossible to say whether the Hulbury pottery is characteristic of the earlier Iron Age culture of this region or whether it is an isolated intruder. That there was a fairly strong Iron Age A substratum in some of the later cultural groups, e.g. at Crayford, is clear enough, but it must at present remain a somewhat incalculable factor.

Among the later pottery, several clearly defined groups can be observed. In fact, the most striking feature of the later Iron Age in western Kent is the diversity of its apparently contemporary cultural groups. These may conveniently be listed as follows:

(*a*) The foot-ring bowls of the Wealden area, where they probably were dominant until swamped at Oldbury by Belgic expansion and elsewhere by the Roman conquest.

(*b*) The "Patch Grove" pottery (see p. 176), current immediately before, and during the half-century after, the Roman conquest. In the Darent valley at any rate it belongs in part to the pre-conquest period.

(*c*) Bead-rim bowls of the type found in great numbers at Charlton (*J.B.A.A.*, xxii, 1916, 183, Fig. 22), where it is the type-fabric of the, presumably late, pre-conquest period. Like the "Patch Grove"

[1] For a fuller account with check-lists, see *Archæologia* forthcoming.

[2] For the distribution of this ware, and for a further account of the finds at Hulbury, which is the site probably of a destroyed hill-fort above Lullingstone Castle, see *Archæologia* forthcoming.

pottery, with which it is probably exactly contemporary, it is distributed up the Darent valley.

(*d*) The coarse wares characteristic of the Crayford site (*Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, IV, 1938, 151, Figs. 4 and 5). So far these have not been found outside a comparatively restricted region at the mouth of the Darent.

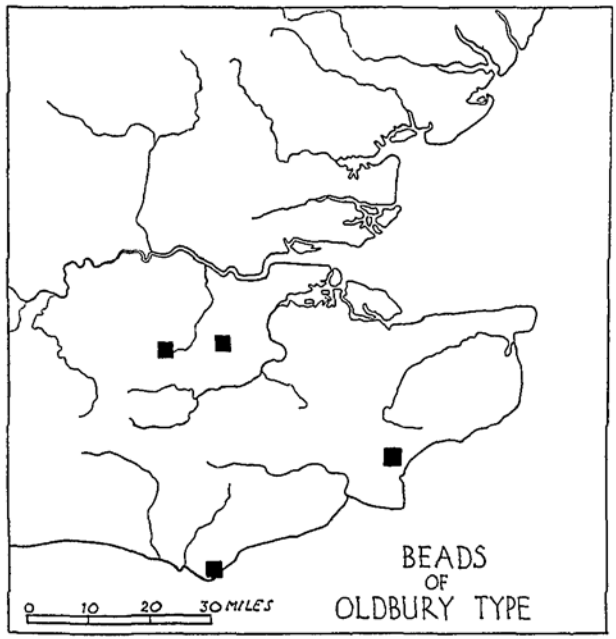

FIG. 10. DISTRIBUTION OF BEADS OF THE OLDBURY TYPE.

(*e*) "South-eastern B" wares, notably the characteristic omphalos-bowls (see *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, IV, 1938, 155, Figs. 10 and 11).

(*f*) Belgic wares.

(*g*) Miscellaneous wares, apparently intrusive. Of these the most notable are a decorated vessel from Chiddingstone (*Arch. Cant.*, XLV (1933), 280)—

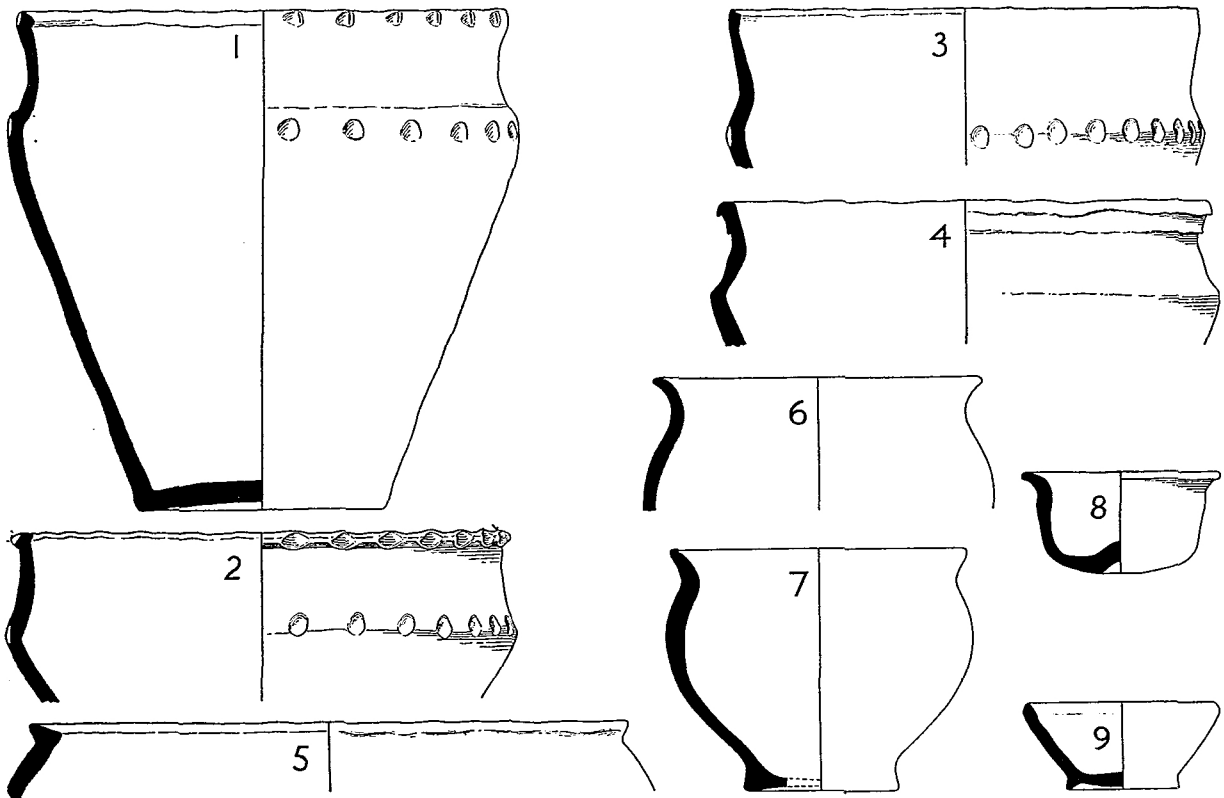

FIG. 11. IRON AGE POTTERY FROM HULBURY (in the Dartford Public Museum).
(Reproduced by the courtesy of Mr. S. Priest, F.G.S.)

the affinities of which lie south and west of the Weald—some pottery from Gravesend (in the possession of Mr. J. P. T. Burchell, F.S.A.) which appears to resemble that from certain East Kentish sites ; and a small proportion of imported continental wares dating from the last years before the Roman conquest, e.g. at Crayford.

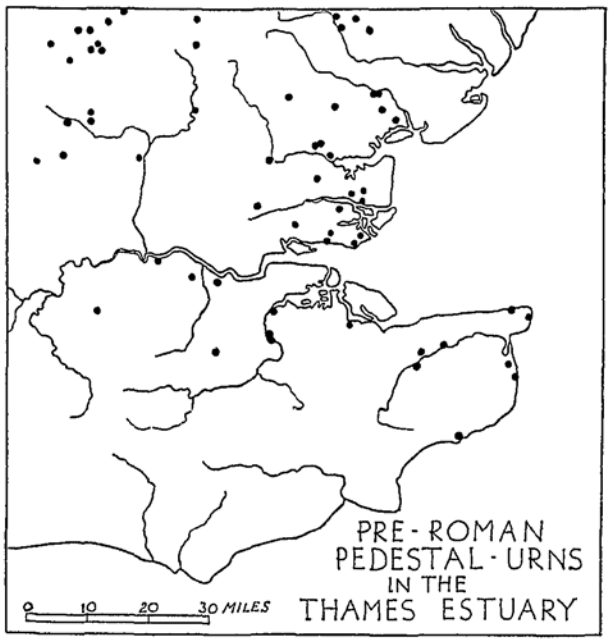

FIG. 12. DISTRIBUTION OF THE IRON AGE PEDESTAL-URNS IN THE THAMES ESTUARY. This map is based on Hawkes and Dunning, *The Belgæ of Gaul and Britain* (*Arch. Journ.*, lxxxvii, 1931, 150-335) with subsequent additions and corrections (see *Archæologia* forthcoming).

Of the above groups, several are local fabrics, the presence of which is self-explanatory. Two groups, however, the South-eastern B and the Belgic, call for further discussion.

" South-eastern B " is an intrusive element represented on various coastal sites on either side of the Thames Estuary and in Sussex. It is characterized by the use of " omphalos-bowls ", probably derived, as Mr. Hawkes suggests (*Sussex*

Arch. Colls., 80, 1939, 252-9), from bronze prototypes, and of a formal curvilinear decoration consisting of "eyebrows" or of interlocking swags in conjunction with small impressed circles. Both features are represented at Crayford; and isolated omphalos-bowls have been found on three other Kentish sites, Maidstone, Plaxtol and Oldbury. The account of this culture given in *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, IV, 1938, 155, Figs. 10 and 11, now requires modification in two respects. The excavations at Oldbury and Mr. Hawkes' analysis of the Sussex Iron Age cultures have shown conclusively that the foot-ring bowls (or "squat pedestal vessels") found at Crayford side by side with South-eastern B wares were in fact so associated by accident only, since they belong in reality to the Wealden Iron Age culture. At Crayford as in Sussex, e.g. at The Caburn, the association represents the fusion of two separate cultures. Secondly, it is now clear that both in Sussex and in the Thames Estuary South-eastern B is an intrusive element; and the close analogies between its characteristic decorative elements and those used on certain Breton pots point unmistakably to Brittany as the immediate source of the culture.

The most important single culture of the Kentish Iron Age was that of the Belgæ. It is therefore a matter for some surprise that west of the Medway there is no site where Belgic pottery is predominant, or even well represented, before the closing decade or two of the pre-Roman period. The cemetery at Stone, near Dartford, is late; and the Belgic pottery at Oldbury was associated exclusively with the Claudian defences. Pedestal-urns are a distinctive type which, in Kent at any rate, are probably a fair criterion of Belgic settlement. Except at Stone and Oldbury they are represented west of the Medway only by isolated examples at Charlton, at Crayford (two) and at Carshalton in Surrey. East of the Medway, on the other hand, they are common; and one of the earliest sites, the cemetery at Aylesford, lies almost on the river, only a few miles from Maidstone.

The Medway was in prehistoric, as in later, times the great highway into Kent from the north (see Jessup, *Archæology of Kent, passim*), a fact amply demonstrated by

the quantity and diversity of finds of all periods from the neighbourhood of Maidstone. It also, however, marks the boundary between the two natural provinces into which Kent falls; and the distinction between "Men of Kent" and "Kentish Men" was as true in prehistoric times as it was later. In particular, it is clear from the evidence both of pottery and of coins, that for a considerable time after the initial Belgic settlement in the Downland triangle of eastern Kent, the Medway formed the boundary between the Belgæ of East Kent and the peoples to the west of the river. Who the latter were it is not easy to define. They seem to have come, in part at least, to judge from their coinage, under some form of Belgic influence or suzerainty; but of actual Belgic settlement there is, as we have seen, little or no trace. They were rather a very mixed assemblage of small peoples living together in an area defined on two sides by the territories of more powerful neighbours, to the south the Wealden peoples, to the east the Belgæ. Wealden influences may be traced along the Darent valley at Hulbury and Crayford; and pottery of the "Charlton" and "Patch Grove" types found its way by the same route down into the Weald; but otherwise the two regions were distinct. On the east the line of demarcation was even clearer. In the latter part of the first century B.C. the frontiers of Dubnovellaunos and Tasciovanus marched on the line of the Medway; and as late as the early years of the first century A.D. the coinage of Epillus rigidly conforms to what was evidently still a well-marked political frontier. It is only under Cunobelin that the distinction vanishes. His coinage disregarded old boundaries and circulated freely everywhere. The same centralizing processes were at work in Kent as elsewhere in south-eastern Britain. Eastern Kent ceased to be a separate kingdom; and at the same time the northern Weald came for the first time within the orbit of Belgic power.

The implications of these facts upon the history of Oldbury are obvious enough. Oldbury was first constructed by a non-Belgic Wealden people at some date within the first half of the first century A.D. In A.D. 43 it was refortified against the armies of Claudius by a people whose pottery was

largely, if not predominantly, Belgic in character. At some time between the two building periods—and the interval between the two was not large (see p. 156)—the original population had come under Belgic domination. We know already from other sources that the reign of Cunobelin saw an expansion of Belgic power down into the northern Weald. One can hardly fail to associate the two events. Whether it was the threat of this same Belgic movement which had brought about the original fortification of Oldbury Hill we can hardly say. It seems a natural explanation for the sudden fortification of this enormous site by a people who had long been peacefully settled in the neighbourhood.

That the Wealden culture had been long established is reasonably certain. The pottery from which the characteristic Wealden vessels were, with comparatively small modification, derived was introduced into Sussex in the third century B.C. Moreover, no trace of any preceding Iron Age culture has been found in the northern Weald, and yet the earliest continental coinage introduced into Britain circulated freely up and down the greensand belt; and at Bigberry Wealden foot-ring bowls were found in an apparently pre-Cæsarian context. The Wealden culture can therefore hardly have reached its final home any later than the beginning of the first century B.C. For a century or more its bearers lived near Ightham in open villages or farms, until, faced with some pressing danger from without, they built the great camp of Oldbury. Their work was in vain. They passed under Belgic domination. In their turn their new masters found themselves threatened, and Oldbury was again fortified, once more in vain. The Weald became a part of the Roman province of Britain, and Oldbury's brief history was done.

Finds at Oldbury.

(*a*) *Pottery.*

(i) *Fig.* 13, *nos.* 1-21, *associated with the construction of the primary defences on Sites* 1-3. A considerable portion of the pottery illustrated is wheel-turned, fairly good grey

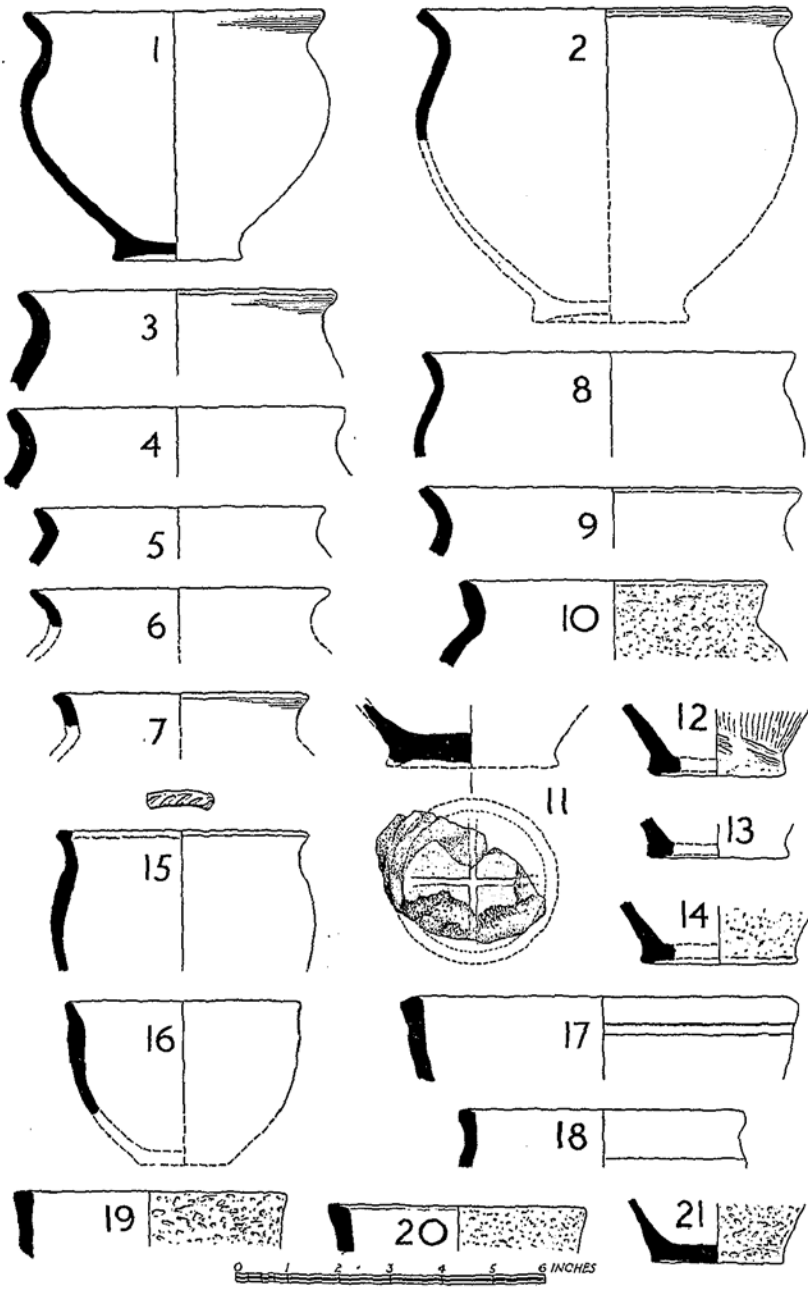

FIG. 13. POTTERY FROM OLDBURY, Sites 1-3, associated with the construction of the primary defences ($\frac{1}{4}$).

ware with a dark brown or black polished surface. The remainder are in a coarser, pitted, grey-brown, hand-made ware. The cross-marked base, no. 11, is a feature characteristic of the Iron Age in Sussex and elsewhere. No. 15, with finger-nail ornament on the rim, suggests Surrey influence, but it must be remembered that a similar vessel is among the unpublished material (largely pre-Belgic in type) from the Aylesford Belgic cemetery.

(ii) *Fig.* 14, *nos.* 1-4, *are from the silting of the primary ditch.*

No. 1. Hand-made, grey-black ware, very crude.

No. 2. Fragment of an omphalos-base in slightly sandy grey ware with a black polished surface. It belonged evidently to an omphalos-bowl of South-eastern B type (see *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, 1938, 151-68), of which Kentish examples have been found at Maidstone, Plaxtol and Crayford.

No. 3. Brittle, poorly fired, gritty hand-made brown ware, the rim is in places pressed outwards into an irregular beading.

No. 4. Grey table-turned ware with a black polished surface, identical with the polished wares from the primary rampart elsewhere (e.g. Fig. 13, no. 1).

(iii) *Fig.* 14, *nos.* 5-19, *Fig.* 15, *nos.* 1-9, *and Fig.* 16, *associated with the rebuilding of the rampart in* A.D. 43. A proportion of these sherds belong, no doubt, to the earlier phase.

No. 5. Grey rather lumpy ware, table-turned, with a dull, soapy finish. For the form cf. Fig. 15, no. 10 from the Patch Grove site.

No. 6. Black gritless ware with a rather sandy pitted surface; hand-made.

No. 7. Grey ware, table-turned, with a high brown-black polish.

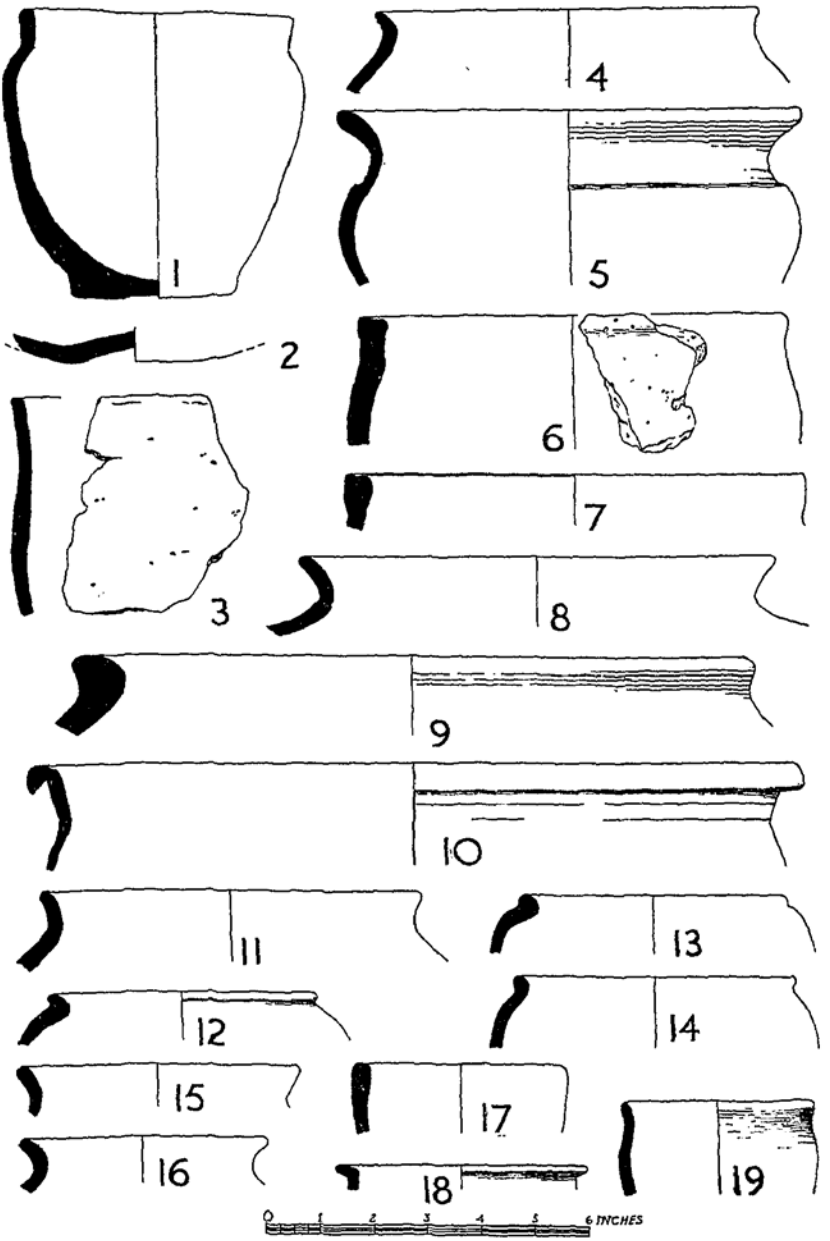

FIG. 14. POTTERY FROM THE NORTH-EAST GATE, OLDBURY, Site 4
Nos. 1-4. From the silting of the primary ditch.
Nos. 5-19. Associated with the rebuilding of the rampart A.D.43.

No. 8. Fairly hard, grey-black ware, table-turned, with a rough orange-brown surface.

No. 9. Heavy grey ware, table-turned, with a brown roughly polished surface.

No. 10. Hard sandy wheel-turned black ware with a rather pitted pale brown surface. This was one of the few vessels from the silting of the secondary ditch.

No. 11. Rather coarse, gritty, grey, wheel-turned ware, slightly polished.

No. 12. Hard, sandy, grey-brown, wheel-turned ware.

No. 13. Hard, grey, wheel-turned ware. From the silting of the destroyed secondary ditch, to the west of the north-east gate.

No. 14. Fine grey wheel-turned ware with a high, dark brown polish.

No. 15. Wheel-turned grey ware with polished surface, similar to the best sherds from the primary rampart.

No. 16. Grey, table-turned ware, rather soft, with a bright red surface.

No. 17. Coarse, grey, table-turned ware, slightly polished.

No. 18. Wheel-turned, gritless grey ware, with a highly polished, flaky, dark grey surface.

No. 19. Roughly table-turned ware with a strongly tooled dark brown surface.

Figure 15.

No. 1. Hard, grey-brown, table-turned ware with a bright orange-brown, polished surface.

No. 2. Wheel-turned, grey ware with a black, polished surface.

No. 3. Wheel-turned, grey ware with a black, highly polished surface.

No. 4. Wheel-turned, grey ware with a buff, lightly polished surface.

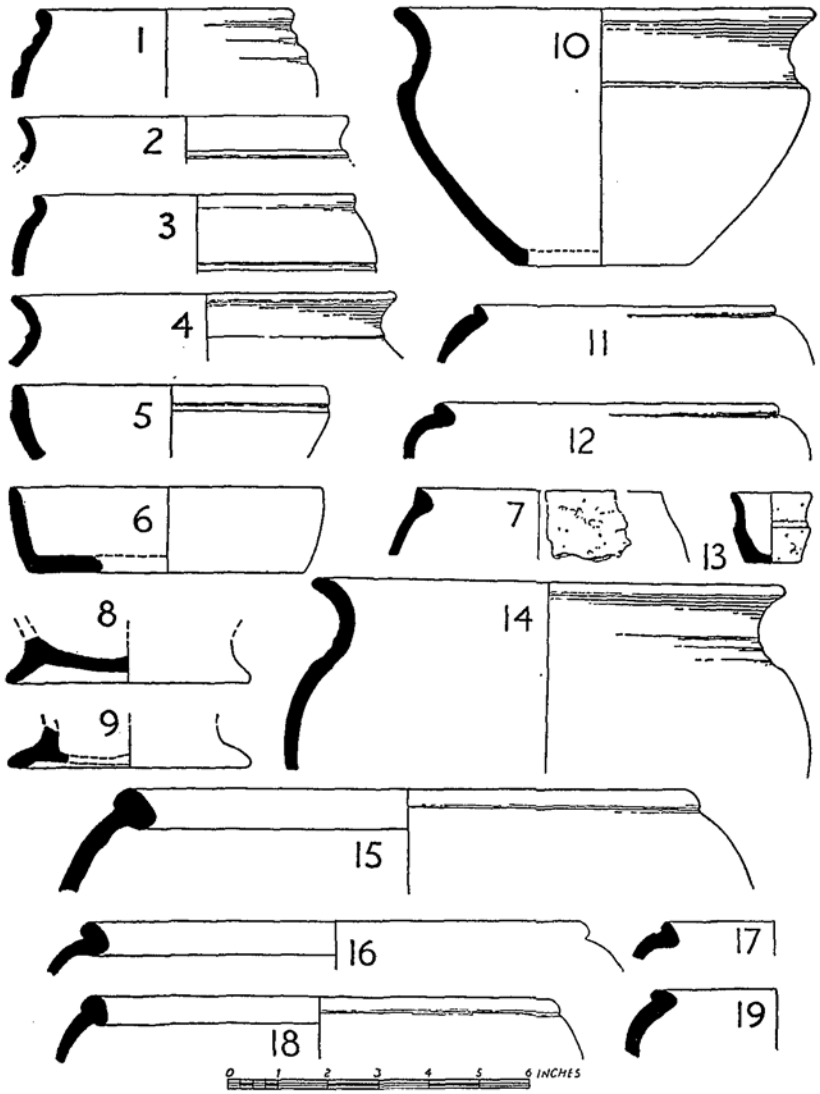

FIG. 15. POTTERY FROM OLDBURY AND FROM OTHER LOCAL SITES ($\frac{1}{4}$)

Nos. 1-9. From the North-East Gate, Oldbury, Site 4, associated with the construction of the primary defences.

Nos. 10-13. From Patch Grove (see p. 176).

Nos. 14-19. From other local sites (see pp. 178-9).

No. 5. Wheel-turned, hard, grey ware, rough-surfaced.

No. 6. Hand-made, pitted, corky grey ware.

No. 7. Table-turned grey ware with the remains of a shiny black surfacing.

No. 8. Wheel-turned pink ware with a grey core and an olive-grey polished surface.

No. 9. Wheel-turned grey ware with a polished black surface.

Fig. 16, nos. 1-2. Two Belgic pedestal urns, from burials inserted in the outer defences by the north-east gate after their completion. They are of wheel-turned ware with a polished, red-brown surface decorated with light burnishing. An identical vessel, from a burial found beneath the Roman villa at Folkestone, is preserved in the Folkestone Museum (S. E. Winbolt, *Roman Folkestone*, Plate xviii, B).

(iv) *Pottery from Patch Grove.*

Figure 15.

No. 10. Coarsely wheel-turned grey-black ware with a polished black surface; cf. Fig. 14, no. 5, from the A.D. 43 defences, and Fig. 15, no. 14, from the Progress Roman villa.

No. 11. Coarsely wheel-turned, red-brown, bead-rim bowl.

No. 12. Coarsely wheel-turned, grey bead-rim bowl.

No. 13. Miniature vessel of gritless brown ware, coarsely wheel-turned.

The pottery from the rubbish dumps on the Patch Grove site was not closely stratified (see p. 154), although the earlier material was, generally speaking, at the bottom of the deposits. A large percentage of this earlier pottery consisted of fragments of large storage jars with an everted neck, generally slightly rilled on the lower portions, and zones of stabbing on the shoulder and round the body. The ware is a porridgy grey with an orange surfacing, rather underfired. The specimens from Patch Grove were too fragmentary for illustration; but they belong to a consistent

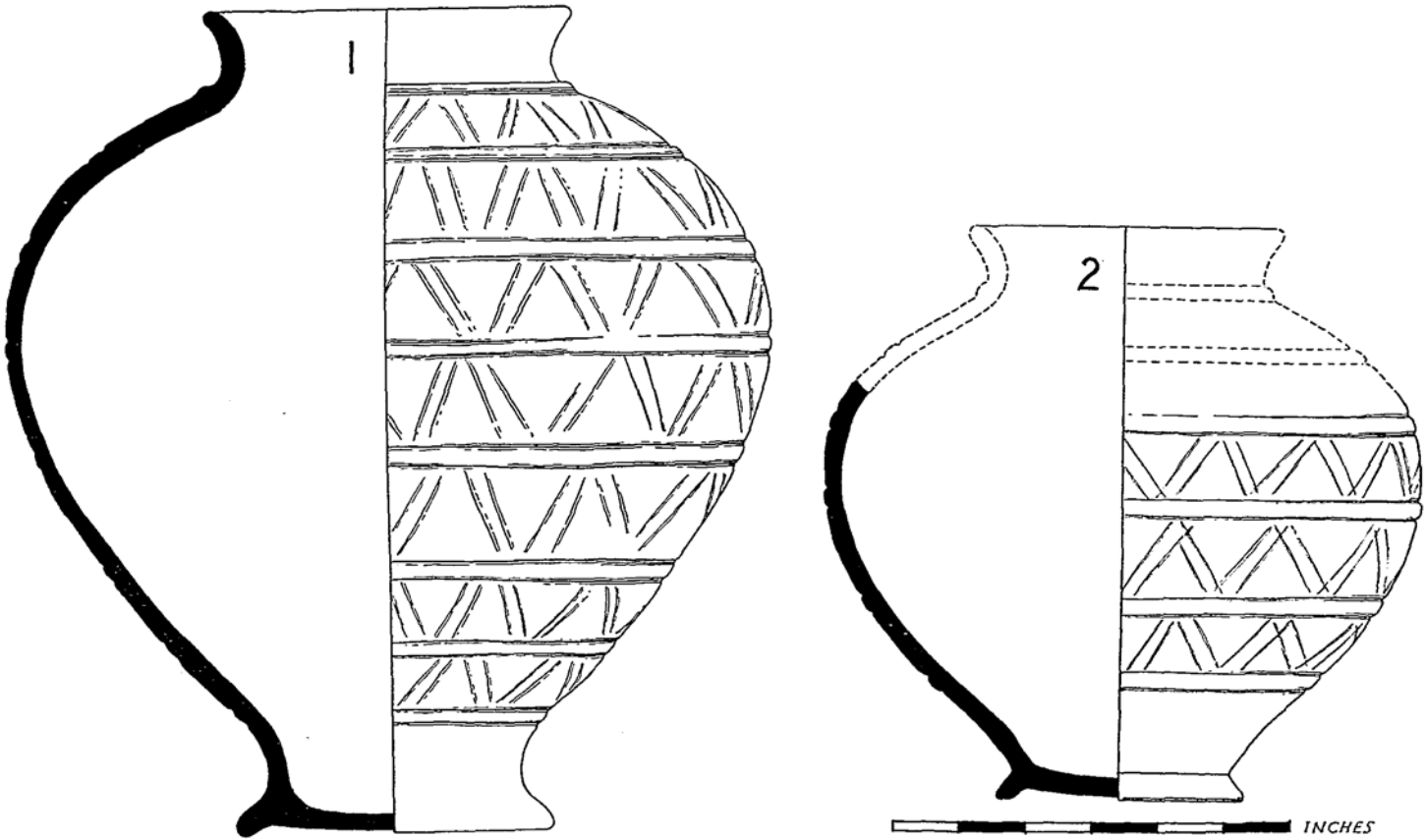

FIG. 16. BELGIC PEDESTAL-URNS FROM OLDBURY,
found containing cremations buried in the outer defences after their completion.

and easily recognizable fabric which occurs on a number of first century A.D. sites in north-west Kent and Surrey (see Fig. 17). These vessels appear in Kent shortly before the Roman conquest and continued in use, in a slightly sophisticated form, probably throughout the first century A.D. There is not yet sufficient material from the immediately preceding period to explain the appearance of a form of decoration normally associated with an earlier phase of the British Iron Age. The pottery series from Leigh Hill, Cobham, in the Guildford Museum does, however, suggest the possibility of direct continuity in that area with the Iron Age A finger-tip tradition (see *Surrey Arch. Colls.*, XXII, 1909, 137-54 ; some of it is shortly to be republished by Mr. A. W. G. Lowther).

Of the other pottery representative of the earliest occupation of the Patch Grove site, the characteristic bead-rim bowls are exactly paralleled in the A.D. 43 levels of the camp above. They show (e.g. Fig. 15, no. 12) a tendency towards the internal projection characteristic of the north-west Kentish group (cf. Fig. 15, nos. 15, 16, 18), but not in its most exaggerated form. Dishes, with absolutely plain upright sides, and a few cordoned Belgic sherds were also found ; but the proportion of specifically Belgic material was small.

There does not really seem to be sufficient evidence as yet to show whether the earliest occupation of the Patch Grove site is contemporary with, or immediately subsequent to, the latest phase of the Oldbury earthworks.

(v) *Pottery illustrated from various other Local Sites.*

Figure 15.

No. 14. Wheel-turned, porridgy grey ware with a purple brown polished coating inside and outside ; cf. Fig. 14, no. 5, Fig. 15, no. 10, of which it is a slightly more developed form.

From the Progress Roman villa at Otford, *c.* A.D. 50-75. (See *Report of the Excavation Committee of the Sevenoaks Society on the Roman Site at Otford*, 1928.) Now in the Sevenoaks Museum.

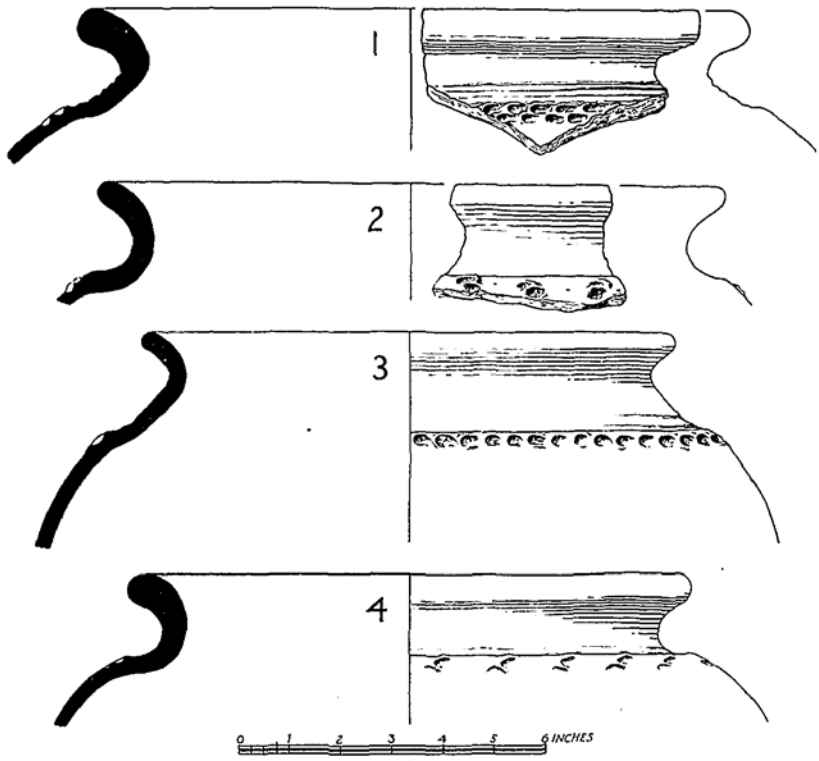

FIG. 17. POTTERY OF THE PATCH GROVE TYPE.

Nos. 1-2. From the " Progress " Roman villa, Otford. In the Sevenoaks Museum. Found with bead-rim vessels of the " Charlton " type (see p. 164) and other 1st century pottery. *Report of the Excavation Committee of the Sevenoaks Society on the Roman site at Otford. Sevenoaks*, 1935.

Nos. 3-4. From Orpington. In the possession of Mr. A. Eldridge. Found with bead-rim vessels of the " Charlton " type (see p. 164) and other 1st century pottery on sites between High Street, St. Mary Cray and Orpington By-pass.

No. 15. Hard, wheel-turned, red ware with much calcite grit.[1]

From the Progress Roman villa at Otford, *c.* A.D. 50-75. Now in the Sevenoaks Museum.

No. 16. Pitted, corky ware (typical of the coarser vessels from the Crayford village site, *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, IV, 1938, 151, Fig. 4), wheel-turned. For the form, cf. the bead-rim bowls from Charlton (*J.B.A.A.*, XXII, 1916, 183, Fig. 22; XXIX, 1923, 227).

From Crayford, site unknown. In the Dartford Public Museum.

No. 18. Corky red ware. From Merle Common, Limpsfield, found with stabbed pottery of the Patch Grove type, and other mid-first century ware (*Sussex Arch. Colls.*, XLII, 110). In the possession of Mr. I. D. Margary, F.S.A.

No. 19. Corky red ware. From Merle Common (see *s.v.*, no. 18).

(*b*) *Glass Beads.*

Figure 9.

No. 1. Blue glass bead with whorls of white glass inset. Found in a fox's earth on the slopes below the ramparts above Styant's Bottom. It is very possibly a relic of a " necklace " found nearby by a workman many years ago and used up as ammunition for a catapult. The technique is familiar in the Iron Age (e.g. the necklace from Queens Barrow, Arras, Yorks E.R., *Archæologia*, LX, 1907, Fig. 30), but this precise form is only recorded from Kent and Sussex. Two examples in blue and white glass are here illustrated, from Westerham (Fig. 9, no. 2) and from Bexley Hill, near Eastbourne (Fig. 9, no. 3), both in the British Museum. A third, from Romney Marsh,

[1] It is doubtful if the grit is really calcite. ED.

published in *Arch. Cant.*, L, 1938, p. 153-4, is similar, but the whorls are yellow. For the distribution, see Fig. 12. This spiral ornament is characteristic of La Tene II on the continent (Déchelette, *Manuel*, IV, 825).

No. 4. Small bead of amber glass. Found unstratified in cutting section A—B by the north-east gate.

No. 5. Small bead of dark blue glass. Found unassociated.

(*c*) *Foreign Stone.*

(i) Part of a rotary quern of Niedermendig lava, heavily striated on the grinding surface, which is slightly concave. It was used in the construction of the revetment near the crest of reconstructed rampart (Section A—B) and dates presumably from the immediately preceding period.

(ii) Whetstone.

A whetstone of micaceous schist was found on Site 2 on the forward slope of the rampart.

(iii) Slingstones.

Roughly circular, water-worn pebbles were found in considerable quantities in all parts of the camp. They are of course foreign to the greensand, though occurring occasionally in overlying drift; and in view of the consistency of their size and shape there can be little doubt that they were deliberately brought to Oldbury for use as slingstones. Large numbers of similar pebbles were found at Dry Hill Camp, Lingfield. The average weight of thirty-seven examples, collected at random, was slightly under 3 ounces.

The nearest pebbly deposit is about 3 miles north of the camp, in Knockmill Wood, where there is a bed of Eocene pebbles, early high level, similar to those found during the excavations. This may well have been the source of the Oldbury slingstones and, in any case, their presence within the camp confirms the extensive use of the route across the Gault to the North Downs, where such deposits are found.