

The Beaker Pottery

It is noteworthy that all the identifiable beaker sherds came from Barrow C, with the exception of one from Barrow B (B13, which could not however be assigned to a specific type). Again the eroded nature of the sherds suggests that they come from a nearby Beaker settlement. Two of the sherds (C49 and C67) had fingernail rustication which is often, although not exclusively, associated with a series of coarser Beaker domestic pottery (cf Gibson 1982, 69 – 76).

One of the sherds (C49) in particular looks as though it might belong to this latter category. There is little doubt that all of these six sherds are residual Beaker occupation material. Had Barrow C been sited virtually on top of such a settlement more sherds would have been found, and since the other barrows were almost devoid of Beaker material, it could be suggested that this Beaker settlement lay not far to the N.E. of Barrow C.

The most diagnostic sherd is C66 which is decorated with an unusual mixture of tooth-comb stamping and linear incision. This combination may be partly due to the idiosyncrasy of the individual potter, but in any case the basic design is clear. Since the sherd represents only the top portion of the vessel it is uncertain whether it represents a pot belonging to Clarke's European Bell beaker, or to his Wessex/Middle Rhine groups. In either case these groups would correspond respectively to Lanting's steps 2 and 3 for East Anglia (Lanting 1972, Fig. 2). The small diagnostic sherd C20, with a thin pointed everted lip with lines of horizontal impressions almost immediately under it, probably broadly belongs to the same early phase as above. C60 is a small worn sherd which has a very narrow cordon on the angle of the belly of the pot. This beaker sherd is however too worn for reliable classification. Whatever the exact identifications, there is an indication here that we are dealing with some of the earliest beakers in East Anglia.

THE FINDS FROM THE BARROWS

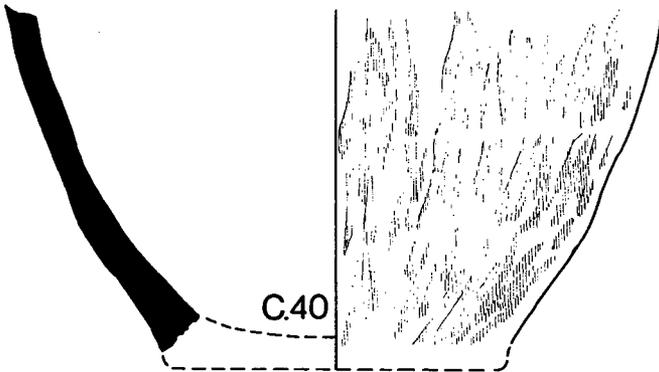
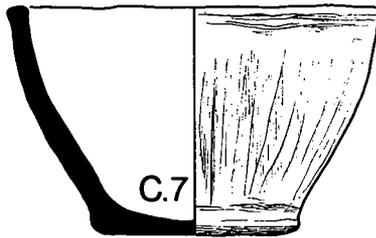
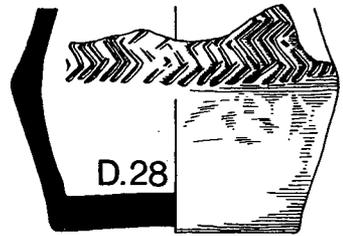
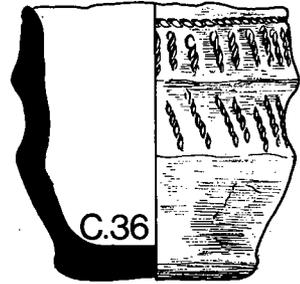
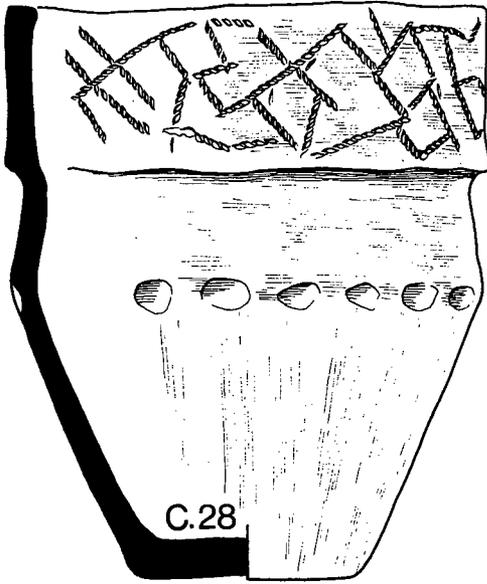
The Pottery

Barrow C

C7 An accessory vessel (Fig. 63, C7). This plain cup has a splayed base and a flat topped, slightly thickened rim. The latter had been added on to the topmost coil of the undecorated pot. The exterior surface is uneven, and has been burnished vertically on the lower part of the pot and horizontally on the upper portion. This treatment was probably executed in that order. Light burnishing also extends into the interior. During manufacture the pot had stood on a rough surface. The fabric is black with fine burnt flint grits, and a sandy texture. The vessel had been fired to a medium brown colour on the exterior.

C28 This complete cinerary urn (Fig. 63, C28; Pl. XIXa; A. M. Laboratory no. 2297) has a deep vertical collar. There is no cavetto neck; instead the straight neck joins the collar at a marked angle, which is particularly conspicuous inside the pot. The vessel has a flat and slightly inturned rim with a straight body, giving the pot a distinctly straight-walled angular biconical form. Impressed twisted cord on the collar forms the decoration in a random and rather degenerate style. An inspection of the whole collar reveals however that this is possibly intended to be a series of empty running lozenges with some attempted filling of the triangles created beneath them (Longworth 1961, type K). Alternatively this decoration may simply be a degenerate version of Longworth type L. The only other decoration is a row of 21 shallow oval impressions on the shoulder. These represent a vestigial stopped groove. This pot exhibits a certain amount of burnishing on the exterior, being vertical on the body, and horizontal on the neck. The burnishing does not occur on the collar, and as this treatment overrides some of the decoration on the shoulder, it would seem likely that the vessel was burnished after the decoration had been applied. The interior, which had been wiped smooth during potting, has a dark stain just below the shoulder. The base has a smooth finish, and the fabric is black with numerous large grits of crushed material (some of which have a cinder-like appearance). The pot had been fired externally to a light reddish brown.

C36 A miniature collared urn (Fig. 63, C36; Pl. XIXd) which has a neck the same depth as the collar, a pointed rim with a slight internal bevel, and a splayed foot. Decoration is executed in impressed twisted cord on the collar and neck only. A single horizontal impressed line below the rim is followed by a row of short diagonal lines on the collar



0 5cm.

FIG. 63 — Bronze Age Collared Rim Urns and other pottery from Barrows C, D and E (scale 1:2).

(Longworth, type E) and a similar row on the neck; both rows together suggest a herringbone pattern. The fabric is black with only a few visible large flint grits. This vessel has been fired both inside and outside to a light reddish brown. A smoothed exterior has a rather lumpy surface which has not been burnished. The interior has been roughly smoothed when very wet. The exterior base shows that this vessel had stood on a rough surface during manufacture. *C40* This reconstructed collared urn (Fig. 64, C40; Pl.XIXb), associated with a cremation, has a plain unexpanded bevelled rim, a vertical collar with a distinct overhang, and an angular shoulder. An incised close lattice pattern on the collar (Longworth, type L) constitutes the only decoration. The fabric is black internally with fairly numerous crushed pottery grits of medium size. A distinct light brown clay surface, about 4mm thick and with practically no visible grits, has been added to the exterior, which has been well smoothed before firing. The base of an urn of similar size, but otherwise undiagnostic, was found in association.

C89 The basal portion only (Fig. 63, C89) of a vessel which seems to have had a low shoulder in relation to its diameter, and a small thick base. A coil junction is visible below the shoulder. Sand, and occasional large quartzite grits, have been used to temper the fabric, which is reddish in colour. It has been fired black both inside and outside. This vessel is probably a cinerary urn.

Barrow D

D1 A sherd from a cup or small bowl (Fig. 63, D1), showing an irregularity in the potting of the rim, which is flat and sharply inturned. The ware is smooth with no visible grits and is fired to a light brownish yellow both internally and externally. The form of the complete vessel is difficult to identify but was probably enclosed. It could have belonged to a cinerary urn auxiliary vessel, although the fabric does not appear to be typical of cinerary urn fabrics, and it could fit into the series of cups from the Middle Neolithic, where it occurs as a rare rim form at e.g. Staines, Surrey (Robertson-Mackay, R., forthcoming, pot P22).

D28. This probable miniature collared urn (Fig. 63, D28; Pl.XIXc) lacks the entire collar and the neck is only very slightly concave. The fabric is a light reddish colour with pottery grits. The body has a lightly smoothed surface, without showing traces of surface treatment. Decoration consists of at least two rows of herringbone pattern (Longworth, type J) executed by linear incision, which does not extend below the shoulder, the body being plain. The excavator is of the opinion that this pot had already lost its collar in antiquity (Pl.XVa), and before being buried in the position in which it was found. This was the initial deposit for Barrow D.

Barrow E

E32 A base sherd (Fig. 63, E32). The fabric appears to be Bronze Age in type and shows external wiping marks made before firing. This and three other sherds may also have come from a disturbed secondary cremation.

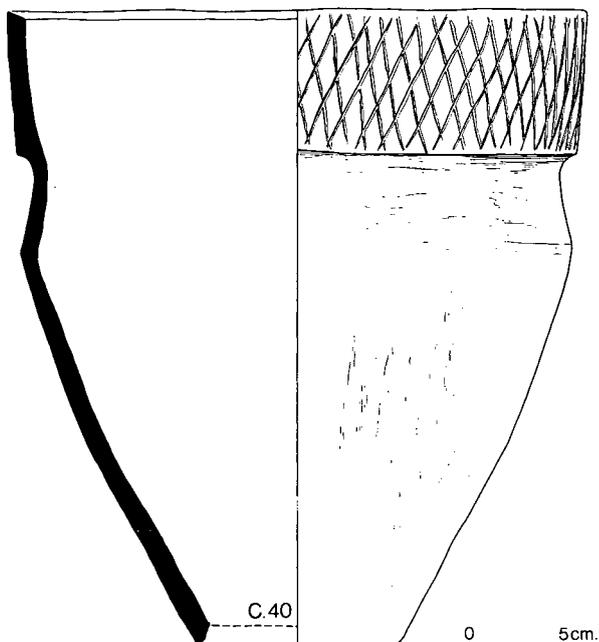


FIG. 64 — Bronze Age Collared Rim Urn from Barrow C (scale 1:4).

Discussion of the Barrow Cemetery Pottery

The Collared Urn Series from Barrows C and D

From Barrow C came the largest series of cinerary urns and associated vessels from the whole of the Brightwell round barrow cemetery. They were stratified in the following sequence: (1) The central cremation burial; C28. (2) The upper barrow mound; C36, C7 and C40. From Barrow D there was no central urn deposit, and the only pot found was D28, which came from the earliest peripheral position.

The central and earliest pot from Barrow C (C28) must come early in Longworth's Secondary Series of collared urns (Longworth 1961). Although the decoration on the collar is very degenerate, the vessel still retains the primary traits of a vertical collar, an unexpanded flat rim and a vestigial stopped groove. This latter decoration is almost exactly similar to that on a miniature collared urn (89mm high) from Bawdsey (Abercromby 1912, II, lxxxii, No. 269); indeed the whole vessel form is remarkably similar to the Brightwell C28).

Brightwell urn C40 was in a stratigraphically later position than C28, but it would appear to belong to the very end of the Primary Series at it has two primary traits (a vertical collar and an unexpanded bevelled rim). The incised lattice pattern on the collar is unusual in Britain, but does occur regionally at Althamstone, Essex (Abercromby 1912, II, 83c; Colchester Museum Reg. No. 1040.05); also another vessel from this site with a lattice pattern on the collar and a vestigial stopped groove (Abercromby 1912, II, 83b). In addition to C40, two other vessels were also in a stratigraphically secondary position, C7 and C36. C7 would seem to be an accessory vessel of the collared urn series. C36, a miniature collared urn, has a parallel in Suffolk at Barnham (unpublished, Norwich Museum Reg. No. 1615). This latter may also be like the miniature collared urn D28, stratigraphically the earliest vessel from Barrow D. The decoration on D28 has sometimes been considered to be akin to late food vessels (e.g. Burgess 1974, Figs. 28 and 29). The miniature collared urn C36 shows two primary traits, an almost vertical collar and a cord-impressed decoration, which is akin to herringbone pattern (D28 certainly has the latter trait). A radiocarbon determination of 1770 ± 130 b.c. (N.P.L. 133) for Brightwell C28 is given by Burgess (1974, 225), and while this seems early in relation to the other dates he quotes for collared urns, it may be a reminder that the beginning of the Secondary Series is possibly earlier than was previously thought.

It would appear therefore that the collared urn series from Barrow C probably represents a short period in time covering a regional overlap between the end of the Primary Series and the beginning of the Secondary Series. The miniature collared urn from Barrow D would also appear to be broadly contemporary with this overlap. It can also be seen that typologically the series from Brightwell is a partially regional one, with parallels from elsewhere in Suffolk and Essex.

The Worked Flint

Owing to the difficulty of dating many of the flints to within less than a Neolithic to Bronze Age chronological bracket, the flint assemblage from Brightwell has not been subdivided into separate sections as with the other finds. Instead it has been treated as one unit divided into barrow sections. Where possible the more diagnostic implement types have been identified and subsequently discussed as chronological groups. The whole assemblage of worked flints (57) from all the barrows is too small (and probably too disparate) for any reliable statistical analysis. For the sake of brevity dimensions are not given for illustrated material, nor indeed for unillustrated material where measurements are not called for. References to right and left hand sides refer to a worked flint when seen from the dorsal surface, the bulb of percussion on the principal bulbar face being at the bottom of the illustration unless otherwise indicated.

Barrow C (Fig. 65)

C3 A long unpatinated secondary flake of blackish-grey flint which had come from a well prepared core, having at least two platforms. The flake appears to have been even longer originally, having been snapped off at the bulbar end. Extensive utilization (Smith 1965, class B) exists on the left hand side.

C15 A small, very short, but complete pointed flint knife of unpatinated blackish-grey flint. It has been struck as a secondary flake from a well prepared core. The working around the edges of the implement is of a very fine technique but is remarkably steep especially towards the point. A small patch of flat ripple flaking is visible on the right hand edge. The knife is so short that it would probably have had to be hafted in order to be used. Its thickness, and indeed, typology, makes it very unlikely that it was a projectile point.

C58 This end scraper has had a markedly pointed scraping edge. The flint is a mottled opaque light grey with patches of light yellow. The secondary flake from which it has been made is broad and relatively thin, coming from a well worked core from which broad short markedly convex flakes had been previously struck. The edge has been well retouched on the left side, but this working becomes minimal and finer on the right edge. The central point of the scraping edge has been broken off subsequently.

C69 A fine plano-convex knife, made from a primary flake retaining only two minute portions of the cortex on the dorsal surface. This flake, of light honey-coloured to light grey flint has been struck from a large well prepared core with flat flake beds. This implement has been worked virtually all round its edge and the dorsal side of the main bulbar surface has been worked to a point. It has been mostly trimmed with small short rather irregular flakes showing a certain amount of step-fracturing, but on the left edge there is a small area which exhibits true 'ripple' flaking with long flat parallel pressure flakes. The bulbar surface is plain. This knife is illustrated with the main bulb at the top.

C80 A denticulated scraper made on a thermal flake of light brown flint. The dorsal surface consists entirely of cortex, except where it has been worked all round the edge by the removal of short steep and deeply convex flakes. This large retouch is characteristic of this type of artefact. Apart from this, the only other working is the removal of some very small flakes in short irregular lengths.

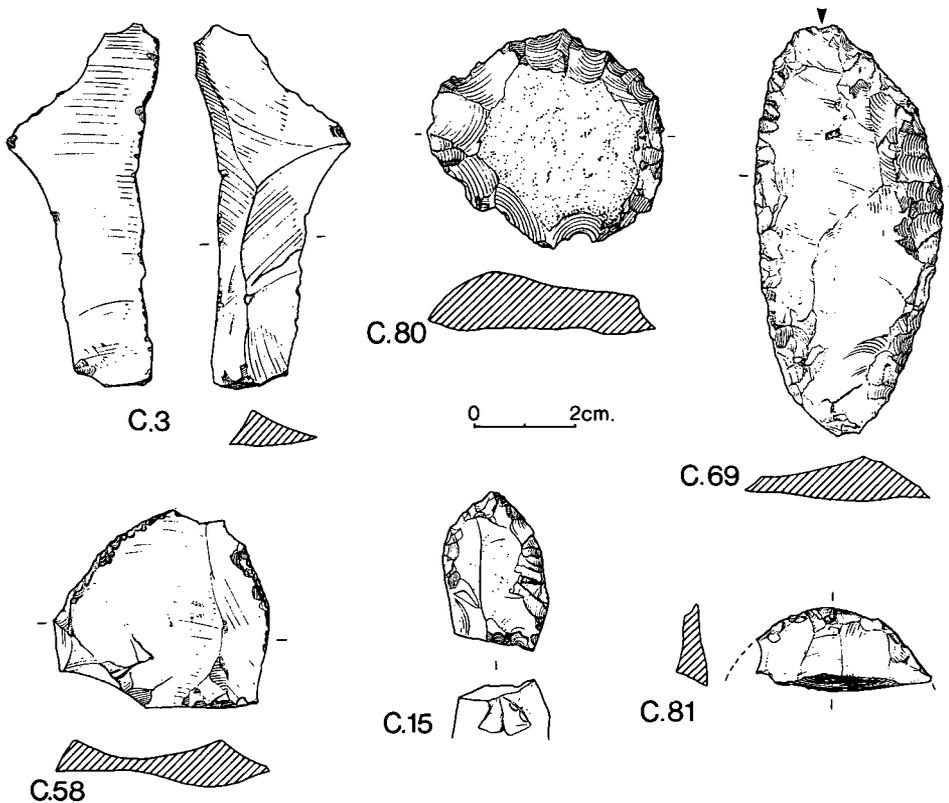


FIG. 65 — Flint implements from Barrow C (scale 2:3).

DEVIL'S RING BRIGHTWELL HEATH

C81 (Unstratified). The snapped-off working edge of a convex scraper which has been subsequently slightly burnt. The surviving scraping edge shows a particularly fine retouch. This scraper has been made on the distal end of a flake which has been struck from a well prepared core. The burning may indicate here that this implement has been associated with a bronze age cremation; equally it may belong to earlier residual occupation material which has come into contact with a contemporary domestic fire.

Barrows D, E and F (Fig. 66)

Illustrated flint from these barrows can be divided into four petrological types. D11 is of a distinctive honey-coloured and quite opaque flint. A very fine quality light grey flint (E4 and E38) is often associated elsewhere with worked down flint axes. Almost entirely black flint (E6) is distinctive, while the remainder, a dark grey or mottled grey-black flint (F4, E9, E31A and B, E28) is in the majority.

D11 A piece of honey-coloured opaque flint with virtually no cortication. Originally it seems to have had extensive thermally fractured surfaces, the remaining flake beds are multi-directional and frequently truncated. This flint appears to be a worked down core.

F4 A scraper made on a large thick bifacial thermal flake. One of the long curved edges has a large boldly flaked retouch with a distinctive denticular edge (like *C80*).

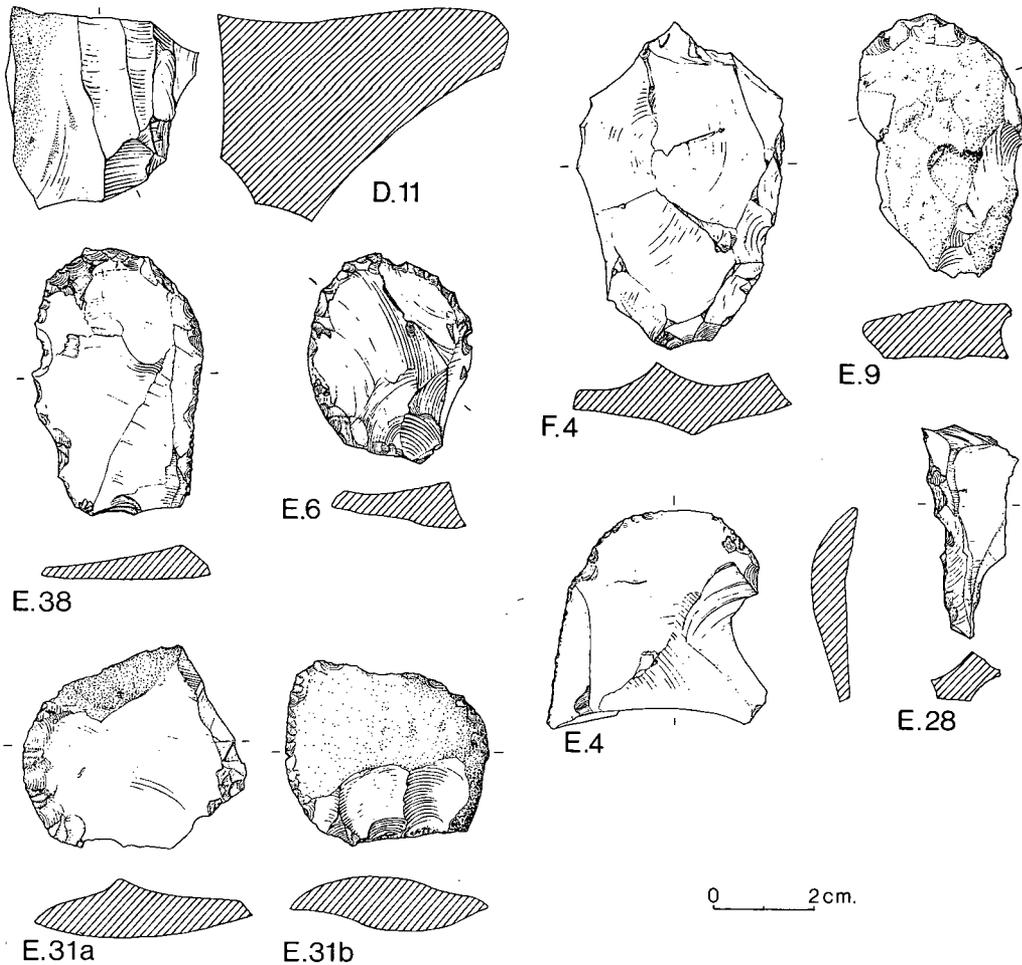


FIG. 66 — Flint implements from Barrows D, E and F (scale 2:3).

E9 A well made end scraper with a convex scraping edge rather roughly retouched, made on a thick thermal flake. The dorsal surface is mostly cortex.

E38 An end-and-side scraper, well made on a thin secondary flake with a medium to fine retouch. The distal scraping edge is convex, showing signs of extensive use and step-fracturing.

E6 A short end-and-side scraper made on a thicker flake coming from a well worked core, both the end and left side scraping edges are convex and retouched. The distal end shows step-fracturing.

E4 An end-and-side scraper made on a secondary flake coming from a well worked core (like *E38*) from which large flakes had already been detached. The retouch is very fine, both on the convex scraping edge and on the straight left side. The whole flake has been snapped across at the proximal end, seemingly subsequent to its being made into an implement. Signs of wear are visible on the scraping edges.

E31B A side scraper made on a thicker primary flake with cortex. It has a fine retouch on the curved left edge.

E31A A side scraper made on a thick primary flake, with a patch of cortex at the distal end. The left scraping edge is convex with a finely executed retouch, including scale flakes.

E28 The snapped off point of a piercer of irregular diamond section. It has denticular working (like *C80*) on the left edge, and is worked on both edges towards the point. Stratigraphy might suggest that this implement was inserted into the barrow mound, and it could therefore date to the later Bronze Age.

Discussion of the Worked Flint

The uncertainties in analysing and dating the whole flint assemblage have been remarked on above. Most of the flints, although found in stratified positions, are very probably residual and therefore flint typology has to be relied on, and the diagnostic material is restricted to only 15 items. Some indication of date may also be taken from the residual sherds (see above) which are Middle Neolithic or Early Beaker in date. They almost all come from Barrow C, but so do a major section of the flint implements.

Taking an overall view, it would seem that most of the implements belong to the Earlier Neolithic (probably the Middle Neolithic), and of the remainder at least two specialised items (*C69* and probably *C15*) belong to the collared urn series, while a few rougher but diagnostic implements seem to belong to the rather wider time scale of the Later Bronze Age (*C80*, *D11* and *E28*). Flakes (e.g. *C3*) and a worked down core (*D11*) demonstrate the presence of good techniques of flint knapping, as do indeed most of the scrapers. Large multi-platform cores had been present. Some (*C58*, *E4*, *E31A* and *B*) show that advantage has been taken of a conveniently shaped accidental flake, but even these mainly demonstrate that good standards of core working and retouch have been maintained although *C58* came from a core producing large squat flakes.

The Later Bronze Age is probably represented by the following: two rather rare denticulated scrapers *C80* and *D11*, neither of which seems to be a 'rough-out'. This type deserves further study. It does not seem to be represented in the Middle Neolithic assemblages (for example at Staines, Robertson-Mackay, forthcoming). Denticulated edges are a common feature of Later Bronze Age industries as at, for example, Hemp Knoll, Wiltshire (Robertson-Mackay, M.E., 1980, Fig. 14). A piercer (*E28*) has denticulated working along its left edge, and the rough retouch is similar to Hemp Knoll, Wiltshire (Robertson-Mackay, M.E. 1980, F54). The Brightwell end scraper *E9* may also belong to this period, although its possible date is much more doubtful. We are on much more certain ground with *C69* which is perhaps the most important flint implement from the site. This plano-convex knife can be dated stratigraphically very probably to the series of collared urns discussed above. In Barrow C, it was stratified between the earliest collared urn *C28*, and the later series *C40*, *C36* and *C7*. There does not appear to be much of a time differential between these two groups, and this would therefore equate it to the primary and secondary collared urn overlap, and link it approximately to the radiocarbon date of 1770 \pm 130 b.c. for the pot *C28* (see above). The fine small knife, Brightwell *C15*, is probably contemporary with *C69* and may be related to the plano-convex knife series.

The Problem of the Residual Flints

At Brightwell, since the excavator carefully excavated and retained all of the stone and flint found we have a rare opportunity to consider both the positive and the negative aspects of the residual flint which came from the excavated areas. Of the total of all the worked flints which came from the barrow cemetery (57) there were some 14 or 24.6% which were definitely implements. Normally the percentage of implements to the total flint débitage is between 4 and 5% (Wainwright 1972, 66). This means that, even assuming a mixed assemblage of a Neolithic to Bronze Age date, there are still far too many implements compared to waste flint material. It must now be considered why this is so. Whatever happened, some element of selection, whether intentional or unintentional, was at work. The Brightwell assemblage could not be a general sample of knapping rubbish, but since it seems most likely to have come from nearby settlements, it is suggested here that this material could have been derived from the surface of actual adjacent living areas, where one might expect more lost or broken implements to be found, and for the great bulk of the débitage to be dumped along with other rubbish elsewhere. This general problem is discussed by Ashbee (1981, 31-2).

It is tempting, of course, to see some of the implements as being disturbed grave goods deposited with un-urned cremations, and this would be quite usual in British round barrows, especially in secondary burials of the Later Bronze Age. These 'disturbed' grave goods are not however identified with ease. The plano-convex knife C69 seems the only certainty, with C15 and C81 being possibilities.

The Stone Implements (Fig. 67)

Barrow A

A7 A probably naturally split oval pebble (Fig. 67, A7) of hard quartzite which shows signs of wear round the edges, particularly at one end. This may have been used as a smoother of some sort, perhaps in the preparation of skins.

A8 An irregular oval pebble (Fig. 67, A8) of a rather soft sandstone which was probably used as a small hammerstone or polisher. There are signs of extensive wear on the edges.

Barrow E

E37 An irregular elongated pebble (Fig. 67, E37) of a hard sandstone which shows a concavity on its long axis due perhaps to its having been used as a polisher. The surface is much too smooth for it to have been the lower stone of a saucer quern. (Unstratified).

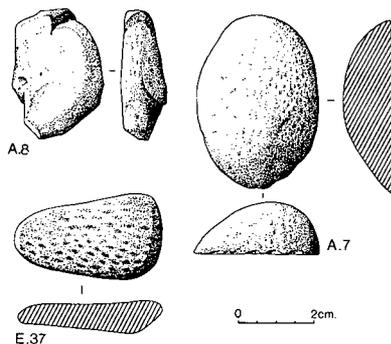


FIG. 67 — Stone implements from Barrows A and E (scale 1:2).

Discussion

None of these stone implements was found in a significant stratigraphical position, and they are not in themselves reliably datable. This is certainly true of E37. A skin dressing tool (A7) in a British prehistoric context is likely to pre-date the Late Bronze Age, when woven fabrics became much more common. It is only A8 which might be a diagnostic piece, and this implement has a much worked appearance strongly resembling hammerstone examples from Middle Neolithic contexts in Southern England, e.g. at Hurst Fen, Suffolk (Clarke, 1960, 225 & S8). It is therefore likely that the stone implements are all residual.

THE POST-BARROW FINDS

The Iron Age Pottery (Fig. 68)

Barrow C

C24 This open cup (Fig. 68, C24) has a slightly everted rim, with a high rounded shoulder and a small splayed base. The top of the rim is decorated with transverse fingernail impressions, and the body with vertical wiping and scratch marks. This vessel has a good firm sandy fabric without other visible grits, being dark grey in colour, fired to a mottled reddish brown and black, both inside and outside the cup. This pot has been built from three coils, with the neck showing considerable finger moulding. The small pedestal foot has been added subsequently to the construction of the cup, and the interior has been wiped smooth with the fingers when very wet.

C71 (Unstratified). This sherd (Fig. 68, C71) probably belonged to a vessel similar to C77 below, except that the rim is thicker and slightly flattened.

C77 (Unstratified). A sherd from a cup or small bowl (Fig. 68, C77) of a fine ware which has been well burnished. The bowl has had a sharp shoulder, with a fine almost pointed rim and slightly concave neck. This type probably belongs to Cunliffe's Staple Howe-West Harling group of the 6th century B.C. (Cunliffe, 1978).

Barrow D

D4 Fig. 68, D4 shows one possible reconstruction of the rim and shoulder. This vessel, represented by some 47 sherds, is in a very fragmentary state. The exact reconstruction is uncertain, but it shows a plain slightly everted rim, the wall being thin near the rim but much thicker on the body. The fabric is coarse and soft with numerous burnt flint grits. The eroded exterior is light reddish brown, but it appears to have been only roughly smoothed, with numerous grits showing through the surface. The interior has a more finished surface, very dark brown, having been smoothed and wiped when wet. Coil construction is visible in some sherds. A single secondary perforation at the base of the neck was probably a repair hole. Continuous fingertip impressions on the outer edge of the rim constitute the only surviving decoration. This pot (or pots) probably belongs to the Early Iron Age.

Discussion of the Post-Barrow Pottery

The presence of a small group of pre-Roman Iron Age pottery from the round barrows is interesting. One of the vessels (more than half of a complete pot) came from a later pit dug into the barrow mound (C24). Indeed all the identifiable sherds came from Barrow C or the adjacent Barrow D, indicating perhaps an Iron Age settlement in this area. In general the group would suggest an earlier rather than later date in the Iron Age. C24 has a not uncommon bowl form, although the decoration on top of the rim is rarer. This latter finds parallels in Cunliffe's East English group of the 1st to 3rd centuries B.C. (Cunliffe 1974, 338, 8) but both the manufacture of Brightwell C24 and the form seem more sophisticated, and C24 is probably earlier. The Brightwell bowl C77 has a fairly high, somewhat rounded undecorated shoulder, and C71 can be considered along with this vessel. Perhaps these shouldered plain bowls, along with the small-footed 'poppy head' shaped bowl C24, have a place in Cunliffe's Darmsden-Linton group of the 5th to 3rd centuries B.C. (Cunliffe 1974, 326, 9). Brightwell D4 might suggest an even earlier date, for although the reconstruction of the vessel form is very tentative, the rim with external finger impressions is clear enough, and it might belong to Cunliffe's West Harling-Staple Howe

DEVIL'S RING BRIGHTWELL HEATH

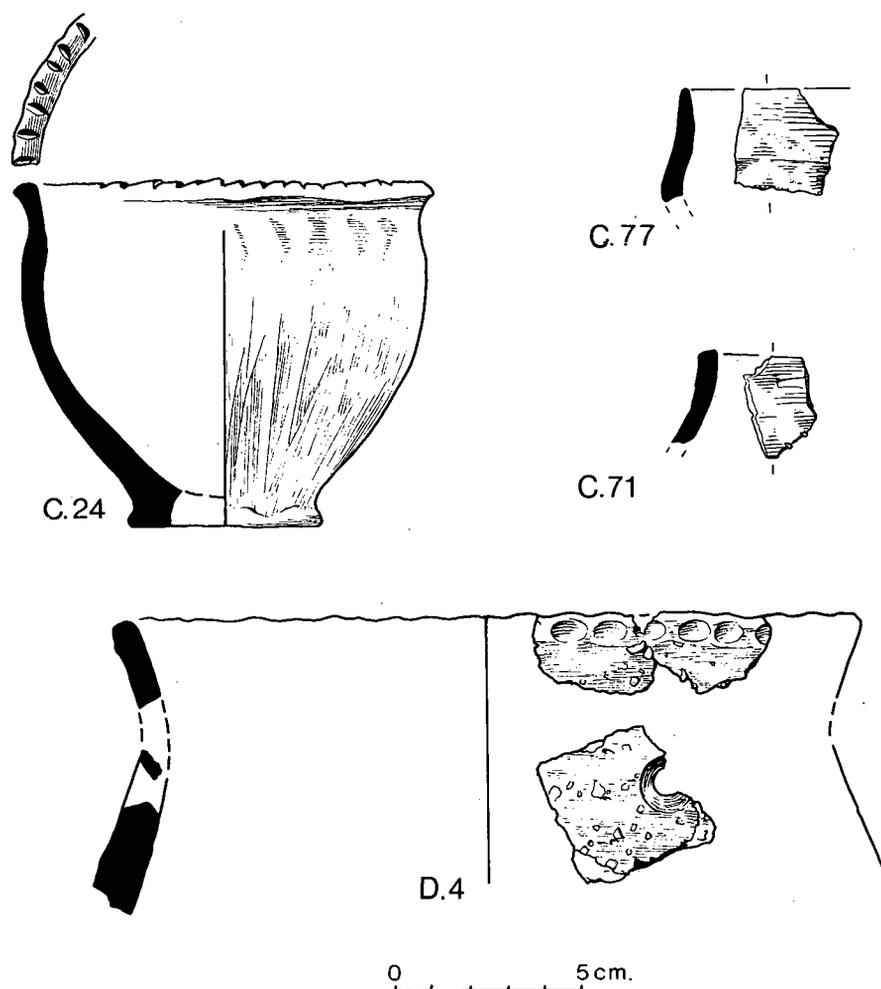


FIG. 68 — Iron Age pottery from Barrows C and D (scale 1:2).

group. Such externally impressed rims occur at Staple Howe itself (Brewster 1963, Fig. 47), dating to the 6th century B.C. It is, of course, difficult to make a more definite analysis of such a small group of pottery.

The Clay Tobacco Pipes

Barrow E

I am indebted to Miss Lyn Blackmore for examining these pipes (not illustrated). She reports as follows:
E34 'Fluted or reeded spurred bowl with relief decoration of plant leaves on both seams (Harley 1963, Fig. 8, d) typical of the period 1840-60. Moulded initials M and G on the sides of the spur show that this pipe was made in Ipswich c. 1844 by Miller and Goodwin (Oswald, 1975, 194).'
E27 'Plain spurred bowl with relief decoration of plant leaves on both seams (Harley 1963, Fig. 8, d), typical of the period 1850-80. Moulded initials E G on the sides of the spur of the bowl show that this pipe was made in Ipswich c. 1855-1864 by Edwin Goodwin (probably one of the four pipe makers recorded in the town in White's directory for 1855 (Harley, 1963, 36)).'

Discussion

These pipes were made in Ipswich and indicate some post-medieval activity on Barrow E in about 1844 and again about 1860. They might well have been left by labourers employed on one or more archaeological 'openings' made into this barrow in the mid-19th century, or else on the planting of the tree-ring around the perimeter of the barrow.

CREMATED REMAINS

Urned Cremation C28

by the late J. S. Weiner, M.A., Ph.D., D.Sc., F.S.A., F.R.C.P.

The bony remains as received for examination were in a very clean condition without trace of charcoal or ash. The remains are without doubt those of a single individual, although the proportion of skeleton preserved is small. The weight of the fragments, 126 grms is well below, for example, that of a single remains from Dorchester, Oxfordshire (Weiner 1951). The incompleteness of the remains and the fact that no fragment is sufficiently large makes it very difficult to decide for certain whether the remains are those of an adult. Pieces of most regions of the skeleton can be identified, though, unlike many cremated burials, the vertebrae are extremely sparse. Proportionately more of the skull appears to have been put in the urn than of the long bones. There are very few fragments of the face, and no teeth and no jaw fragments can be identified. In the incompleteness of the remains this cremation contrasts rather strongly with many of the cremations from Dorchester.

Two Urned and Ten Un-urned Cremation Groups

by D. R. Brothwell, B.Sc.

Most of the human remains were in a sandy-clay soil, but a few rested in a dark peaty soil which was considerably inferior from the point of view of preservation. The average fragment size was about 2cm, which restricted age and sex deductions. Most were very light in colour and probably about 30% showed noticeable heat distortion. The general fissuring and texture suggest that the bodies were submitted to considerable heat, and not partially cremated as was probably sometimes the case. At least some of the bones were broken after being burnt. All the remains were unwashed when received for examination, and charcoal fragments were still mixed with some of them. Generally, there is proportionately more post-cranial material in these groups than in the urned cremation C28.

C12 A few fragments of burnt bone. Could possibly be adult. Not sufficient material to suggest age or sex.

C16 Bones from an un-urned cremation; perhaps associated with *C12* in sand of mound. The remains are fragmentary even for a cremated individual, and it seems probable that some of the burnt remains were not buried. The ratio of skull to post-cranial remains seemed similar to that in the skeleton. The sutures were open at least in some parts of the vault. Sex and age could not be determined.

C27 A few fragments of burnt bone (plus charcoal). They are certainly not of a child, but there is not sufficient to distinguish between an adult and a youth.

C31 Bones from the burial pit associated with urn C28. Bone and charcoal fragments. As much as 50% of the remains may be skull. Probably representative of only one individual.

C33 A considerable quantity of material, but probably represents only one individual, although it is questioned whether un-urned cremations of this sort might not sometimes be composite. Proportionately more skull may be represented than other areas. Sex and age could not be ascertained, but the individual was probably adult, and the

DEVIL'S RING BRIGHTWELL HEATH

condition of the roots of at least three permanent teeth supports this. The sutures were open along some areas of the vault. Most parts of the body appear to be represented.

C48 Bones from the urned cremation *C40*. The remains are unwashed and mixed with charcoal. Only one individual is represented, and the fragments are mainly long-bone. From the size of certain shaft remains the person was probably an adult.

C56 Bones associated with potsherd *C55*. The remains consist purely of one or two small cremated fragments and no information could be gleaned from them.

C62 Bone associated with potsherd *C60*. All that can be said of this shaft (long-bone) fragment is that it was not from a child.

C64 Un-urned cremation in sand of mound. A considerable number of fragments, with each part of the body represented in proportion, except possibly the vertebrae. The individual was probably male, and the dentine remains of what may have been a second molar shows pre-mortem attrition which suggests an age of over 20 years.

C76 A small fragment of bone in the upper sand of the mound.

D7 Burnt bone from central pit. Only a few fragments, with the result that sex and age could not be determined.

D14 Un-urned cremation in shallow pit. Numerous fragments in a peaty soil. Many are crushed and disintegrating, but one or two skull fragments are noticeably large. The individual may have been an adult but there is not certainty of this or of the sex.

THE CHARCOAL

by J. F. Levy, D.Sc., A.R.C.S.

Nearly all identifiable samples contained charcoal of Oak, *Quercus robur* type, sometimes from at least two different trees some of which were slower grown than others (*C52*), occasionally with fragments of another species, which was only identified in one case (*C73*) as Alder, *Alnus* sp.

Other species were found in only three samples, by themselves:

C92 Possibly Elm or Ash.

E7 Possibly Ash.

E12 Diffuse porous wood with medium size rays.

Beech, *Fagus* sp., was noted in two samples (*C6* & *C9*) but as these came from areas of disturbance the material may be irrelevant.

Acorns were found in one sample (*C91*).

NOTES

¹ I owe the reference to Mr D. Sherlock.

² I am particularly indebted to Mr A. B. Snowling, the Ancient Monuments leading-hand attached to the excavation, whose official duties ceased with the dispersal of the labour force, but who returned to the site and worked throughout the weekend as a lone volunteer.

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