A Wealth of Knowledge:

Unlocking a decade of archaeological research



Wiltshire Museum research agenda Wiltshire Archaeology and Natural History Society





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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction by Lisa Brown, Curator

In November 2019, the Wiltshire Museum was awarded £47,000 from the Arts Council England Designation Development Fund, to review the research undertaken on our nationally important archaeology collections. From 2010-2020, more than 200 postgraduate students undertaking archaeological research visited the Museum to access the collections, but only a small fraction of their work had been fed back into our collections database and gallery displays.

One of the main aims of the project was to identify the results of all this research and then update museum records, to improve our collections management systems. Going forward, as a legacy of the project, new processes have been put in place that will require greater detail from researchers concerning their results, and also ensure that this information is regularly imported into our collections management system, MODES. By reviewing the research that has been undertaken over the past decade, it has also been possible for the Museum to identify the under-researched areas of the collections, to promote them as possible areas of future enquiry to post-graduate students looking for projects. This is a new and dynamic way forward for museums, who are usually approached with requests to view material, rather than considering what they might want to find out about their own collections and then actively pursuing academic partners with whom they can work collaboratively.

Not unsurprisingly, a majority of the 200 post-graduates who have visited the Museum over the past decade, have come to research our Early Bronze Age collections from the World Heritage Site of Avebury and Stonehenge. However, this Research Agenda clearly identifies the potential to do much more, with opportunities to reassess our Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, later Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, and Medieval collections.

In addition to this document and processes, another key legacy of the project has been the creation of c. 1,600 'enhanced' MODES records, which document the findings of researcher in detail. From 2023, these records will be shared online, as part of the Wessex Museums Virtual Collections database, making the information accessible in the widest possible terms.

1.2 Methodology

This report is based on the results of a review of archaeological research undertaken on the collections of the Wiltshire Museum (the Museum) as part of the A Wealth of Knowledge Project (WoK). In scope, this review encompassed all research projects either undertaken or published between 2010 and early 2022, and which resulted in results either received by, or accessible to the Museum. 80 reports, articles, and theses, were identified and reviewed as part of the project, including sixteen PhD theses (Figure 1.1). A comparable study by Historic England (2022) identified twelve PhD theses covering the museum collections between 2010 and 2020, suggesting the review was relatively comprehensive.

These results have then been contextualised within а non-exhaustive literature review, focusing on the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine (WANHM) and key national journals, and a of the Museum collections. review Unfortunately, a full review of the physical collections was beyond the scope of this project, and physical artefacts were only accessed in a small minority of cases where additional clarification was required, and as such, the suggestions of this report must be considered preliminary, and built upon by more detailed reviews as part of the planning of subsequent research projects.

1.3 Key findings

- The Early Bronze Age (2,500-1,500 BC) and Middle Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age (1,500-100 BC) collections are the most widely used elements of the Museum collections.
- Interest in the Early Bronze Age is driven by research projects accessing grave goods and human remains, combining both more traditional typochronological methods and scientific analyses (e.g. aDNA analysis, isotopic analysis).
- Interest in the Middle Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age has been primarily driven by animal bone from Potterne and East Chisenbury, almost exclusively revolving around scientific analyses.
- The Later Iron Age to Roman (100 BC AD 410) and Medieval to Post-Medieval (1066-1900) collections generate the least research interest relative to the

proportion of the collections which they make up.

- The Later Iron Age to Roman period has been accessed by an equivalent number of research projects as the Neolithic period, but the results have been much lower impact. Typically, research projects into the Later Iron Age and Roman periods employ typomethodologies which chronological engage with objects in only a very limited way, and contribute little to our wider understanding of sites. Generally, it can be said that the Museum collections have been treated as an extension of the Portable Antiquities Scheme Database.
- The Medieval to Post-Medieval period has generated negligible research interest, limited to discussions individual objects.
- The Museum's positive relationship with Dr Richard Madgwick of the University of Cardiff has driven consistent research interest in the animal bone assemblages of Potterne and East Chisenbury, both through large-scale research projects such as FeastNet (<u>https://feastnet.co.uk/</u>), but also through students supervised by Dr Madgwick.
- Building similarly effective working relationships with academics in other regional universities should be seen as a priority.
- Many aspects of the Museum collections may not be capable of supporting PhD level research, but may be a better fit for MSc or taught MA dissertation-level



Figure 1.1: Number of research projects by period.

projects, and the museum needs to more proactively promote this resource.

- The museum holds a large quantity of archaeological ceramics covering all periods, however, there has been extremely little interest in the material generally.
- The Early Medieval cemeteries at Collingbourne Ducis, Blacknall Field, and Barrow Clump, as well as sizable animal bone and ceramic assemblages from the associated settlements at Collingbourne Ducis and Market Lavington offer clear avenues for future research and should be promoted accordingly.
- Gaps in research into the collections have highlighted weaknesses in the

coverage of the collections themselves, which can then inform future collecting priorities.

- A lack of significant, stratified, animal bone assemblages hampers research into the Neolithic, Early Bronze Age and Late Iron Age to Roman periods.
- The ability of the museum to facilitate research into the Palaeolithic and, more notably, Mesolithic is limited by a lack of excavated archaeological material.
- The human remains from the Late Iron Age to Roman period are typically from relatively isolated rural burials, with no larger groups around which a research project can be easily built.
- Whilst the Museum holds a significant collection of human remains from the Early Bronze Age (2,500-1,500 BC), surprisingly few of the grave goods and

funerary vessels in the collections have associated human remains.

- The Museum holds relatively little material relating to the Middle to Late Bronze Age (c.1500-1000 BC).
- The Museum holds a large number of potentially significant assemblages and archives excavated during the twentieth century and which remain unpublished, in particular:
- Grimes' excavations of the moated manor-house at Membury compliments the large assemblage from Ludgershall Castle, and would also meaningfully increase the research potential of the Medieval collections more generally.
- Proudfoot's excavations of two barrows on Roughridge Hill, Bishops Cannings, produced important evidence of early Neolithic occupation, with ceramics comparable to the Conybury Anomaly.

2.1 Summary of the collections

2.1.1 Palaeolithic

The Palaeolithic collections of the Wiltshire Museum are relatively limited. There are 1,248 entries attributed to this period in the collections management database, with the majority of these being records of individual Lower Palaeolithic handaxes. Whilst there have been some recent acquisitions of chance finds, such as a handaxe from Huish reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme (DZSWS:2019.10), the majority derive from old collections. In both cases there is limited surviving contextual information.

By far the most significant assemblage of Palaeolithic objects derive from the artefact-rich gravel pit at Knowle Farm, Little Bedwyn. 1,132 of the records are attributed to this site, and it is likely that some of the handaxes attributed to neighbouring parishes, such as two from Savernake, may also have derived from the site or a related deposit. The Knowle Farm gravel pit is famous for the quantity of flint recovered, and by 1903 over 2,000 flint 'implements' had reportedly been discovered (Cunnington and Cunnington 1903). This represents the most significant deposit of Lower Palaeolithic material in the region, and whilst the handaxes are now widely dispersed, the collection held in Wiltshire Museum remains the largest (Roe 1968; 1969). The collection has been recognised from early on as a mixture of multiple deposits, probably deposited by river action, unfortunately limiting their usefulness for statistical analysis (Cunnington and Cunnington 1903; Roe 1968; 1969).

Several descriptions of the site appeared in the Wiltshire Archaeology and Natural History Magazine (WANHM) in the early 20th century, however they contain insufficient detail to allow for in depth discussion of the geology or archaeology of the site (Cunnington and Cunnington 1903; Dixon 1903; Kendall 1906). More recently, in 1977 a trial trench was opened by mechanical excavator (Froom 1983). This was able to provide limited clarification of the clarification of the site, but due to the method of excavation the stratigraphic relationships of the 70 Paleolithic flints recovered were not recorded, with the exception of a single handaxe (Froom 1983). It is also disappointing that none of the material recovered during this excavation appears to have entered the museum collections. Both Kendall (1906) and Froom (1983) note the presence of flakes and other evidence of knapping within the material recovered, although this is denied by the Cunningtons (Cunnington and Cunnington 1903). A sample of 461 of the less worn handaxes were examined in detail by Roe for his PhD, who noted that the assemblage is dominated by ovate forms, and suggested that it was characterised by unusually crudely-made tools (1968; 1969). The Knowle Farm flints are also known for a highly distinctive and poorly understood 'gloss' (Cunnington & Cunnington 1903; Dixon 1903).

The only other sites associated with significant numbers of Palaeolithic objects are both in the Salisbury-area, with 58 handaxes attributed to the gravel extraction pits at Millford Hill and Bemerton. The handaxes were donated by C.J. Read, who also published the sites (Read 1884), and whilst detailed sketch plans allow the deposits to be placed on the map with relative accuracy, stratigraphic detail is again limited. Examination by Roe (1968; 1969) also suggests that the groups are unlikely to represent a closed group of implements, reducing their usefulness for statistical analysis.

Comparison of the distribution of the findspots of Palaeolithic objects in the museum collections with those plotted by Roe (1969) reveals little change in the second half of the 20th century. The Kennet Valley and Marlborougharea in North Wiltshire continues to form the focus of the distributions, with a developing scatter of chance finds and stray flints in the North West of the county.

2.1.2 Mesolithic

The Mesolithic collections of the museum are similarly limited, as is the case for the archaeological record for the period in the county as a whole (Hosfield et al. in Webster 2007). There has been only a single significant excavation of an in situ Mesolithic site since Radley's (1969) review of the period, at Blick's Mead, Amesbury, south of the Museum's collecting area (Jacques and Phillips 2014). Searching the collections management database produces 1,908 records, however, this number is not very informative. Most again record small groups or single flint flakes or tools, often as part of larger, mixed field walking assemblages. A review of the collections reveals just 13 groups of more than 50 flints identified as belonging to the Mesolithic (Figure 2.1). Twelve of these groups were collected through fieldwalking or survey, and there is a notable number of assemblages of 200-800 flints in the north west of the county, as well as a collection of 776 flints collected during a survey by Gingell in Teffont (Gingell and Harding 1983). A smaller assemblage of 282 Mesolithic flints is attributed to Golden Ball Hill, Alton, where a programme of geophysical survey and trial excavation by Cardiff University in 1997 identified *in situ* Mesolithic occupation levels (Dennis and Hamilton 1997). Similarly, a small field walked assemblage of Mesolithic flint is attributed to Hackpen Hill, also a known Mesolithic site (Whittle 1990: fig. 2).

The most significant assemblage derives from the excavations at Oliver's Hill Field, Cherhill, where excavations in advance of development in 1967 identified occupation spanning the Late Mesolithic to Early Bronze Age (Evans and Smith 1983). Although thin and patchy, and in places cut by later ditches, the site was well stratified with Mesolithic layers sealed by a deposit of tufa. The latter contained a lens of charcoal near its base radiocarbon dated to 5280 +/-140 BC, as well as smaller quantities of Mesolithic flint and bone. No precise count of the Mesolithic flint assemblage was published, however, it was estimated to comprise c. 10% of the 130kg of struck flint recovered from the site. It is dominated by bladelets and contains both scalene micro-triangles and obliquely blunted points, and was argued to represent a single broadly contemporary industry, with most flints described as being in fresh condition. In addition to the flint assemblage, a potentially important assemblage of 1,681 animal bone fragments were recovered from Mesolithic contexts. Of this group, only 125 fragments were positively identified due to the extent of fragmentation, and the assemblage was not quantified beyond NISP, it was however not deposited with the rest of the archive at the Wiltshire Museum, and the osseous material was deposited with the British Museum (Natural History) under the accession numbers ARC 1981.5163-5533 and ARC 1982.5003-5016. Overall, only а single



Figure 2.1: Distribution map illustrating the distribution of flint assemblages of more than 50 flakes dating to the Mesolithic period. Image contains Ordnance Survey data, crown copyright 2022.

Mesolithic feature was identified, a 'working hollow' (although see Davis 2012, cited below), and the original excavators interpreted a general trend of gradual abandonment as the site became increasingly saturated with water.

2.2 Research summary

2.2.1 Summary

Only three papers were identified as having accessed the pre-Neolithic collections of the Wiltshire Museum since 2010, with one further piece of research undertaken by an independent researcher, but which did not lead to a thesis or written report (although the results were fed back to the museum). Whilst material from these periods is among the least requested, this is proportional to the relative size of these collections. The papers meaningfully engage with the museum collections and make significant contributions to our understanding of the archaeological and taphonomic development of the sites which they discuss. Unfortunately, the none of the results have received wider publication.

Davis (2012), as part of their PhD thesis with the University of Worcester, re-examined 1,007 flints from Mesolithic levels at Oliver's Hill Field, Cherhill, including all of those from the 'working hollow'. Davis' detailed reanalysis supports the interpretations of Pitts (in Evans and Smith 1983), that the group as a whole is Late Mesolithic in date, and suggests that changes in the relative proportion of obliquely blunted points may imply a localised continuation of the form into the later Mesolithic period. They also argue for a new interpretation of the 'working hollow', drawing on the high proportion of burnt flint (not mentioned in the original report), the presence of other materials such as sarsen fragments and animal bone, and parallels to other sites to suggest that the hollow may have been deliberately dug for deposition. Their argument that the transformative properties of a tufa spring may also have had symbolic importance has interesting parallels with Jacques and Phillips's (2014) recent observation of the spring at Blick's Mead, Amesbury, where a rare alga would have caused submerged flint to permanently stain pink.

As part of a wider scheme of fieldwork Hosfield and Green (2015) have re-examined a sample of Lower Palaeolithic hand axes from Knowle Farm, focusing on morphological

examination, but also examining a smaller sample with pXRF analysis and Scanning Electron Microscopy in an attempt to better understand the Knowle 'polish', which they suggest may be caused to the redeposition of silica at a microscopic level. A full publication of the study is hoped to be forthcoming. Egberts (2017) has then also accessed the Palaeolithic handaxes from Bemerton and Milford Hill, Salisbury, as part of her study of hominin colonization of the Avon valley. The only other piece of research undertaken on the Museum's collections was at the instigation of the former curator, Dr Paul Robinson, which led to the suggestion by the South West Implement Petrology Group that a chert handaxe attributed to Knowle Farm may in fact have originated in Broom, Dorset.

2.2.2 Research projects and publications

Egberts, E. (2017) *The Palaeolithic of the Avon valley: a geoarchaeological approach to the hominin colonization of Britain.* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Bournemouth.

Davis, R. (2012) *The Nature of Mesolithic Activity at Selected Spring Sites in South West England.* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Worcester.

Hosfield, R. and Green, C. (2016) *Project Report: Lower Palaeolithic archaeology at Knowle Farm* Unpublished report: University of Reading.

2.3 Research priorities

2.3.1 Palaeolithic

The research potential of the collections as they currently stand is obviously limited, although there are clear opportunities to expand upon our knowledge of the collections. Whilst research into the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic has tended to focus on the region further south, around the Hampshire basin and the river valleys feeding into the extinct Solent River (e.g. Hosfield 1999, and the recent exceptional discovery of in situ Palaeolithic occupation at Harnham, Salisbury, Bates et al. 2014), Knowle Farm remains the largest deposit of Lower Paleolithic flint in the region, comparable in the South West only to Broom, Dorset. The main opportunity for research into this assemblage seems to be extending the preliminary research of Hosfield and Green (2015) to a larger sample¹. In particular, a better understanding of the technology and morphology of the group would allow for the assemblage to be compared to similar studies of other deposits (e.g. Hosfield and Chambers 2009). A smaller scale project could be built around attempting to provenance the chert handaxes attributed to Knowle Farm. Passing references to chert handaxes were made by both Cunnington and Cunnington (1903) and Kendall (1906), although no chert was included in Hosfield and Green's (2016) sample. The chert axes could be compared morphologically to the Broom and Knowle assemblages as a whole, and whilst the Knowle 'polish' is less likely to be visible on chert by eye, if the redeposited silica can be detected at a microscopic level this would seemingly confirm the attribution.

2.3.2 Mesolithic

As with the Palaeolithic, the opportunities for further research using the museum collections are limited. As the only assemblage of excavated material, the material from Oliver's Hill Field, Cherhill, is of central importance. The flint from the site is well stratified, and the potential exists to include it in a regional study of knapping technology incorporating assemblages from outside the museum collections (both Pitts in Evans and Smith 1983 and Davis 2012 suggest similarities between Cherhill and Wawcott III, Berkshire). Notably only seven percent of the flints examined by Davis were encrusted with tufa, and patination similarly appears limited. The group may therefore be suitable for usewear analysis, although the assemblage is dominated by knapping debris. The limited discussion of the animal bone assemblage from Cherhill, as well as the small proportion of the assemblage identified to species level, both imply that the animal remains could be usefully re-examined (see Banfield 2018, discussed below, **3.2.1**). The Museum has approached the Natural History Museum to attempt to arrange for the animal bone assemblage's transfer.

¹ Hosfield (pers. comm.) has no intention to expand the study themselves.

3.1 Summary of the Collections

3.1.1 Archaeology

The Neolithic monuments of Wiltshire are among the most famous archaeological sites of Southern Britain. The Museum collections dating to this period are perhaps surprisingly small, yet are extremely significant, with assemblages relating to a number of key sites throughout the county. Amongst the earliest Neolithic assemblages in the collections are the unpublished contents of early Neolithic pits excavated beneath the Early Bronze Age Bishops Cannings G61 and G62a round barrows on Roughridge Hill by Edwina Proudfoot in 1964. These pits produced an assemblage of 610 Early Neolithic ceramic sherds, including carinated bowl forms and with a composition which closely resembles that seen in the Conybury anomaly (Barclay et al. 2018), implying a very early date. Unfortunately, it is unclear what proportion of the human and animal bone assemblage was retained, and that which is recorded in the museum collection management system could not be found in time for inclusion in Barclay et al.'s (2018) project (see 3.2.1). A comparably early Neolithic site has also been identified at Oliver's Hill Field, Cherhill (Smith and Evans 1983), discussed above (see 2.1) for its Late Mesolithic occupation. 210 early Neolithic sherds were recovered, in addition to a slightly larger Middle Neolithic Peterborough ware assemblage. A sizable assemblage of flint is also recorded from Neolithic features at the site, but as has previously been noted, the animal bone assemblage from this site is now held by the Natural History Museum.



Figure 3.1: The Breamore Axehead.

In addition to these site assemblages, 59 Early Neolithic stone axeheads are held by the museum, including the exceptional Breamore axehead, made from Alpine Jadeitite (Figure 3.1, see **3.2.1**).

Other Early Neolithic sites assemblages in the collections include a substantial collection of ceramics from Windmill Hill, excavated by Rev. H.G.O. Kendall in 1924 (Cunnington and Goddard 1934: 83), and a small assemblage of ceramics, flint and animal remains relating to both Cunnington's and Conah's excavations at Knap Hill (Cunnington 1911; Conah 1965). Unlike many other Neolithic enclosures, Knap Hill appears to have only been occupied only briefly in the Neolithic (Conah 1965), an interpretation recently reinforced by radiocarbon dating (see below, 3.2.1). The most famous of the Early Neolithic assemblages held in the Museum collections derives from Stuart Piggott's excavations of West Kennett Long Barrow, in addition to the human remains, a small assemblage of early Neolithic pottery and flint was also recovered, but the archive also contains a sizable assemblage of Middle Neolithic Peterborough ware. Much smaller assemblages of Peterborough ware are also associated with

the excavations of the Millbarrow. Winterbourne Monkton, (Whittle 1994) and Beckhampton Road, Avebury, long barrows (Ashbee et al. 1979), the former was much disturbed however, the excavations of the latter were able to reconstruct the construction sequence of the barrow in relative detail. Beckhampton Road (Bishops Cannings G76) is of particular interest as the monument contained no human remains, and appears to have been built around three partially articulated cattle skulls placed along its central axis. Although the onsite recording is inconsistent, with a few exceptions which appear to have been removed at the time of the initial report's preparation, the entire animal bone assemblage is extant.

The principal Late Neolithic assemblage in the collections relates to Wainwright's 1969 excavation of Marden Henge, in the Vale of Pewsey (Waingwright et al. 1971). The excavation of this henge monument, comparable to the more famous site at Durrington Walls, produced a large assemblage of 602 Grooved ware sherds, mostly in the Durrington style, as well as a small but important collection of animal bone, dominated by cattle and pigs, and flintwork. More recent excavations on the site have also produced further artefacts, including a pair of exceptional oblique arrowheads (Bishop et al. 2011), although the bulk of these archives still await deposition. The Museum also holds the archives relating to St. George Gray's 1908-1922 excavations of Avebury, and the sizable Grooved ware assemblage from the Cunnington's 1926-8 excavations of Woodhenge, as well as numerous assemblages from other, smaller sites from across the period not mentioned here.

3.1.2 Human remains

The most substantial assemblage of human remains dating to the Neolithic period belong to the excavation archive of West Kennett Long Barrow, with the Museum holding all of the postcranial elements recovered during Stuart Piggott's excavations. Unfortunately, the cranial elements are held separately by the Duckworth Laboratory in Cambridge. As would be expected, the majority of Neolithic human remains in the collections date to the early Neolithic; with smaller assemblages of material from historic excavations of long barrows such as Bowl's Barrow (Cunnington 1889), and Lanhill Barrow (Cunnington 1910). A more recently excavated assemblage of human bone belongs to the archive associated with Whittle et al.'s (1994) excavation of Millbarrow, Winterbourne Monkton, although the barrow had been leveled in the 19th century, meaning the remains were largely from disturbed contexts. In addition to these groups, a number of isolated burials are also held in the collections: including an unpublished juvenile burial from the ramparts of the Knap Hill causewayed enclosure, and late Neolithic remains from Marden Henge (Wainwright et al. 1971) and a cist near Millbarrow, recently radiocarbon dated by the Beaker People Project to 2880-2630 cal BC (see 4.2.1, Parker Pearson et al. 2019: SK132). A substantial quantity of cremated human remains of probable Late Neolithic date were also recovered in a pit below West Overton G44 in association with Late Neolithic pottery, but is not published.



Figure 3.2: Map showing the distribution of key sites mentioned in the text. Image contains Ordnance Survey data, crown copyright 2022.

3.2 Research summary

3.2.1 Summary

Published at the very beginning of the period covered by this project, the results of *Programme JADE*, remain some of the most impressive of all of the research undertaken on the Museum's Neolithic collections (Sheridan et al. 2010; Sheridan 2011). Combining scattered reflectance spectroradiometry, a technique elsewhere used to explore the surface of Mars, and extensive fieldwork, this pan-European project has been able to identify the likely source of the exceptional Breamore jadeite axehead as a free-standing block of Jadeitite near Genoa, Italy. In addition, the typo-chronological work undertaken by the researchers allows for the axehead's long pre-depositional history to be reconstructed. After initially being produced in Northern Italy, it was then substantially reworked in Southern Britanny during the latter half of the Fifth Millennium BC, before reaching Britain in the early centuries of the Fourth, probably alongside early farming groups.

The collections have also benefited in a large number of radiocarbon dating projects since 2010, particularly by Historic England. Barclay et al. (2018) sampled carbonised residues on Early Neolithic ceramics from sites across Wessex, including Oliver's Hill. The using Bayesian modelling, the results have led to the re-evaluation of the chronologies of the earliest ceramic industries in the region; with the Carinated bowl tradition current 4245-3395 cal BC (95% probability) and the subsequent decorated (Windmill Hill) tradition current 3890-3285 cal BC (95% probability). The unpublished assemblages from Bishops Cannings G62a and G61 were consulted, although no suitable residues were identified. IN addition, Roberts and Marshall's (2020) study of Neolithic pit digging has further refined our understanding of the chronologies of ceramic deposition in Wiltshire. In particular, they highlight a period of overlap between Grooved Ware and Peterborough Ware deposition around c. 3000 cal BC, although the overlap between Peterborough Ware and Early Neolithic ceramic traditions is less substantial. The project was also able to describe decreasing relative levels of cattle in pits through the period, in contrast to pigs, caprids, and deer, which increased in relative number after the Early Neolithic. This, they argue, supports the suggestion of a shift in subsistence strategies as the Neolithic matured. Radiocarbon dating of a number of samples from the original excavations of Marden Henge was undertaken by English Heritage (anon. 2013), to tie in with the 2010 excavations of the site. The results confirm the construction of the monument in the middle of the Third Millennium BC. Antler sampled during the original dating programme was redated, providing statistically consistent results, but unfortunately, the human remains from Marden failed to provide sufficient carbon. As part of their wider Gathering Time project, Whittle et al. (2011: 97ff) obtained radiocarbon dates for the Neolithic occupation of Knap Hill, which ultimately confirm Conah's (1965) original interpretation of a short, single phase of Neolithic occupation. These dates were republished by Marshall et al. (2020) as part of a gazetteer of radiocarbon dates funded by English Heritage between 2003 and 2006, several of which were also relevant to the collections.

More traditional studies of material culture include Ard and Darvill's (2015) reassessment of Middle Neolithic Peterborough ware assemblages, which included that from West Kennett long barrow (Figure 3.3). The aim of the project was to investigate the validity of the traditional sub-divisions of the fabric reassess the established sub-divisions of the tradition, Mortlake, Ebbsfleet, and Fengate, finding that they continue to be meaningful



Figure 3.3: A Peterborough ware bowl from West Kennet Longbarrow.

divisions. Over the course of his MSc thesis and ongoing PhD, Rowlands (2018; 2022) has undertaken use-wear analysis on a number of Neolithic objects, such as an antler macehead from Warminster G10 antler macehead, and the flint knife from Millbarrow, as well as bone beads from West Kennett long barrow. These projects have made substantial contributions to our understanding of the complex use-lives of these objects, demonstrating, for instance, that the Warminster macehead had been produced from an extensively used antler pick or hammer, and discounting previous interpretations of the object as an adze-sleave. In particular Rowlands' MSc thesis highlights the potential value of even relatively small-scale Masters-level research projects in increasing our understanding of museum collections. A further small-scale feasibility study of flint from Marden henge has demonstrated that it may be appropriate for use-wear analysis in the future (Chan 2019).

Banfield's (2018; 2019) reassessments of the osseous assemblages from West Kennet and Beckhampton Road long barrows, amongst other sites, importantly highlights the lack of attention animal remains received even relatively recently, especially when fragmentary. In addition to identifying potential differences in practice between the north and south of Wiltshire, Banfield makes a substantial contribution to our understanding of Beckhampton Road Long Barrow (Banfield 2018; Banfield et al. 2019). In particular, her examination identified evidence of a healed impact trauma on one of the cattle skulls placed along the central axis of the long barrow, which almost certainly relates to an unsuccessful, attempt to slaughter the animal. She suggests that these animals may have been known individuals to the community, extending 'personhood' to them. Another study of osseous material, this time focusing exclusively on human remains, was undertaken by Cuthbert (2019), examining remains from Winterbourne Monkton G17a and Oldbury long barrow, Cherhill, amongst others, as part of a reassessment of human remains from over 40 long barrows across Southern England. Previously unrecognized levels of interpersonal violence and chronic disease were identified amongst the remains, and she argues that this may have factored in the decision to select certain individuals for inclusion in the monuments.

Animal bone from Marden henge features in what is probably the most highprofile research into the Neolithic period in recent years: teeth from eight pigs and one cattle have been sampled for multi-isotopic analysis as part of projects studying the mobility of animals consumed at henge sites. Both demonstrate that Marden was able to draw in individuals from a wide geographical area, with just one of the sampled pigs having been raised locally (Evans et al. 2019; Madgwick et al. 2019).

3.2.2 Research projects and publications

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3.3 Research Priorities

The Museum's Neolithic collections appear to be well-utilised, and there are few obvious gaps in the research to be highlighted. The relative lack of scientific analyses of human bones in the collections when compared to the subsequent Early Bronze Age is probably partially due to the major re-dating projects undertaken for a number of Neolithic monuments prior to 2010 (Bayliss et al. 2007a; Whittle et al. 2007), including radiocarbon dating of numerous samples from West Kennett long barrow (Bayliss et al. 2007b) and Bowl's Barrow (Smith and Brickley 2007). That the cranial elements of the West Kennett human remains are held by the Duckworth Laboratories, Cambridge, seriously hampers the kinds of research that the Museum collections can contribute to, as without teeth several aspects of isotopic analysis become more difficult and expensive (R. Madgwick pers. comm.). It should be noted however, that similar research projects would be possible on the remains from other sites, including Bowl's Barrow and Millbarrow. Ancient DNA analyses of the Neolithic human remains from long barrows held by the Museum may be of interest, especially given the short timeframe in which the individuals interred in West Kennett appear to have died (Whittle et al. 2007) and recent results concerning the close familial relations of many within the Hazelton North long barrow, Gloucestershire (Fowler et al. 2022).

In light of Banfield's (2018) recent work on the animal bone of assemblage from Beckhampton Road long barrow, wider scientific analysis of these remains may help build a more detailed understanding. Whilst Ashbee's (1967) contexts cannot be located spatially with certainty, they can often be attributed to, for example, the pre-mound soil or mound material in a given area of the barrow, meaning that a refined understanding of the chronology of the mound's construction should be possible. This would also allow for the relationship between the display of the three cattle skulls along the central axis and the barrow itself to be fleshed out, with isotopic analysis providing an insight into whether the animals were raised elsewhere.

As with the scientific analysis of human remains, lipid analysis of ceramics from the Neolithic was also extensively studied in the 2000s, although no ceramics within the Museum's collections were sampled (Copeley et al. 2005). Lipid analysis of grooved ware assemblages have demonstrated a statistically significant link with pig preparation, especially in non-domestic contexts (Mukherjee et al. 2007; 2008), although with the bulk of grooved ware

sampled at Durrington walls found to have been associated with ruminant products (Craig et al. 2015). Lipid analysis of ceramics from Wessex henges has often focused on those from Durrington walls, with the conclusions drawn often relating back to Stonehenge - either feeding those who laboured in its construction (Craig et al. 2015), or possibly in the production of tallow (Shillito 2019). Analysis of the grooved ware assemblage from Marden may provide an interesting comparison. Whilst Grooved ware was the only major Neolithic ceramic group in the collections not examined in this period, a PhD investigating Grooved ware in the Thames Valley has recently been undertaken (Botfield 2012), and it seems probable that its results would be applicable at least in general terms.

Aside from seeing use wear assessment of the flint from Marden Henge completed, the other immediate concerns revolve around publishing and improving awareness of unpublished Neolithic sites and features. Of particular significance are the early Neolithic pits identified under Bishops Cannings G61 and G62a, whose ceramics have never been published in detail but are contemporary with some of the earliest Neolithic ceramics in Wessex, and the probable late Neolithic cremation burial(s) found under West Overton G44, both excavated in the 1960s by Edwina Proudfoot and Jodie Birmingham respectively. In particular, a detailed discussion of this material may clarify what elements and proportion of the assemblage are extant.

4.1 Summary of the Collections

The Early Bronze Age funerary assemblages held by the Wiltshire Museum are of international importance and many of the most well-known and significant objects in the Museum collections are amongst them. The core of these collections is the Stourhead Collection, purchased by the Society in 1883 and consisting, largely, of the various artefacts excavated from Wessex barrows by William Cunnington I and Richard Colt-Hoare in the early 19th century. Fortunately, the pair kept detailed records for the time, and the majority of the approximately 500 objects can be attributed to particular barrows and burials, and often relatively detailed accounts of their depositional contexts can be reconstructed (e.g. Needham et al. 2010; Higham and Carey 2019). This collection contains many notable grave groups, including early graves such as Mere G6a and Milston G51, but with a clear majority attributed to the 'mature' Early Bronze Age, most famously of course being the 'Golden barrow' (Upton Lovell G2e) and the exceptional Bush Barrow (Wilsford G5, see cover image).

This initial collection of objects has been supplemented by further excavations and chance finds of Early Bronze Age sites and burials undertaken in the 19th and 20th centuries, but especially in the post-War period. These excavations include the Cunningtons' excavation of Roundway G8 (Cunnington 1856), the 'Manton Barrow' (Preshute G1a, Cunnington 1907), The Sanctuary, Avebury (Cunningham 1932), two separate internments at Nethavon Flying School (Grinsell 1957: 70), and Oliver's Camp (Cunnington 1907b), as well as numerous barrows excavated between 1950 and 1975,

including Milton Lilbourne G1-5 (Ashbee 1986), Wilsford G36-39 (Grimes 1964), Wilsford G51-54 (Smith 1991), Avebury G55 (Smith 1965), Winterbourne Stoke G43 (Ozanne 1972), Avebury G6b (Smith 1966), Amesbury G39 (Ashbee 1981), Amesbury G51 (Ashbee 1978), Lamb Down (Vatcher 1963) and the numerous barrows examined as part of Nicholas Thomas' excavations on Snail Down, in Collingbourne Kingston and Collingbourne Ducis (Thomas 2005). The Museum also holds archives relating to the unpublished excavations of Bishop's Cannings G61 and G62 and West Overton G44. Whilst it must be said that the bulk of the grave goods in the collections originate in earlier excavations, the collection as a whole represents a large and extremely diverse assemblage of grave goods covering much of Wiltshire as well as the chalklands of Dorset.

Unfortunately, the Museum's collection of Early Bronze Age human remains is less extensive. Cunnington and Colt Hoare did not typically retain human remains, and the Museum holds only a single secondary cremation from the Stourhead collection, from Wimborne St. Giles G2, Dorset. Similarly, the human remains from a number of later excavations, such as those at Woodhenge by Maud Cunnington and Amesbury G39 by Paul Ashbee were deposited with other institutions such as the Duckworth Laboratory, Cambridge, separate to the rest of the archive. Although it is not intended to be a complete list, Table 1 shows the correspondence between human remains, funerary vessels, and other grave goods at a selection of sites, and illustrates the relative scarcity of grave assemblages in the collections that combine two or more of these categories. In summary, 281 MODES records of human remains are attributed to the Early Bronze Age specifically, although this will perhaps include some secondary cremations which post-date 1500 BC. The usefulness of this number in terms of quantification is doubtful, as, for instance, the three Beaker-period flat burials excavated by Peter Fowler at Overton Down XI (Fowler 2000: 82-86) are recorded across 29 MODES records. Nonetheless, the Museum holds human remains from approximately 35 different archaeological sites or barrows, representing a significant collection of material. This includes unpublished material such as that from Bishops Cannings G61.

The Museum's collection of ceramics from the Early Bronze Age is also of note. The Stourhead collection contains twelve substantively complete beaker vessels, ranging from finely decorated examples such as that from Durrington G36 (Figure 4.1), through to more crudely executed vessels such as those from Wilsford G51 and G62. This total has been expanded greatly by subsequent excavations of prehistoric barrows and other sites, such as those listed above as well as Paul Ashbee's excavation of the Early Neolithic West Kennet Long Barrow, which was found to contain two finely decorated early Low-Carinated beakers. Excluding field walked and chance find assemblages such as those in the Owen Meyrick and Andrew Sewell Collections, the Museum MODES database holds 376 records relating to excavated beaker sherds or assemblages, attributed to 54 different sites. Whilst a number are funerary vessels, perhaps a majority are loose sherds found within the barrow mounds or pre-mound layers probably relating to domestic occupation. One important assemblage in this vein is an assemblage of c. 500 beaker sherds recovered in pre-barrow features relating to a probable settlement on Snail Down, **Collingbourne Kingston and Collingbourne Ducis**



Figure 4.1: The Durrington G36 beaker.

(Thomas 2005). Further domestic beaker assemblages were recovered by Chris Gingell during the Marlborough Downs project, excavated at Bishops Cannings Down and Dean Bottom (Gingell 1980; 1992). A group of sherds from the latter was recovered in the fill of a pit which is associated with a radiocarbon date of 2460-2140 cal BC, and is an important assemblage for dating Needham's (2005: 188) Tall Mid-Carinated group of beakers. However, Dean Bottom also illustrates that the number of sites identified in this report is likely an underestimate; this important assemblage was recorded with only a broad 'Bronze Age' classification, with no reference to either beakers or the Early Bronze Age.



In addition to beakers, the Museum also holds a large collection of 40 miniature funerary vessels, often interpreted as incense cups, again from both the Stourhead collection and more recent excavations, as well as 60 records relating to collared urns recovered through excavation, attributed to 35 sites. Whilst the latter number excludes a small number of chance finds, it seems likely to be an underestimate, as it is again dependent upon these vessels and fabrics being identifiable within the Collections Management System, although it may also be a reflection of the general lack of evidence for domestic settlement in Wessex during the post-Beaker period prior to the development of Deverell-Rimbury fabrics (Pollard and Healey in Webster 2007: 83). That there is apparent continuity of occupation at both Dean Bottom and Bishops Cannings Down between the beaker and Deverell-Rimbury phases implies that both



Figure 4.3 (above): Detail of preserved gold studs. Image: David Bukach/University of Birmingham.

Figure 4.2 (left): Gold-studded dagger pommel and dagger from Bush Barrow. Image: David Bukach/University of Birmingham.

assemblages may cover the period c. 1900-1600 BC (Gingell 1980; 1992).

Many of the more recent excavations listed above have also produced assemblages of worked flint (although in many cases the bulk of the assemblage may related to late Neolithic pre-barrow occupation), however, these assemblages have been less consistently discussed than their ceramic counterparts, for instance, an assemblage of c. 600-800 worked flints attributed to the excavation of Avebury G55 was not discussed by Smith and Simpson (1966). Unfortunately, unless worked or included as a grave good, animal remains do not appear to have been retained at the majority of these sites, and the only relevant assemblages, from the excavations at Wilsford Down (Grimes 1964) and Steele's unpublished excavation of Codford, are both relatively small.

4.2 Research summary

4.2.1 Summary

Unsurprisingly, the Museum's Early Bronze Age collections are amongst those who receive the most interest from researchers, as well as consistently attracting high-profile and wellfunded research projects. It is also notable that there are a number of objects, particularly Early Bronze Age goldwork, which have been accessed repeatedly over the course of the last 10 years.

The recent publication of the Beaker People Project (Parker Pearson et al. 2019) and Olalde et al.'s (2018) study of genetic shifts in the Early Bronze Age demonstrates the exceptional value of the Museum's collection of human remains from this period, despite its small size relative to collections of grave goods. The Beaker People Project sampled ten individuals, including

two from the Late Neolithic, for radiocarbon dating and Strontium, Oxygen, Carbon, Nitrogen and Sulphur isotopic analysis, as well as undertaking an osteological review of the remains. In addition to identifying non-local individuals, such skeleton 7 from Wilsford G54, the large corpus of new radiocarbon dates allowed for a reassessment of the dating of beakers in Britain, arguing that funerary depositions of the vessels had largely ceased by c. 1950 BC, significantly earlier than previously thought. Olalde et al.'s (2018), study sample seven individuals, including one from the Late Neolithic, for ancient DNA analysis. In addition to providing accurate indications of genetic sex (in some cases contrary to previous osteological assessments) these results were part of a much larger pan-European study which was able to identify a major genetic shift at the start of the Bronze Age. Perhaps more excitingly, the data from Olalde et al.'s study has allowed Booth et al. (2021) to reconstruct familial relationships at a local level, highlighting a number of closely related beaker-period individuals buried in the Amesbury area, as well as the two individuals excavated from the Netheravon Flying School.

In addition to these projects, there have also been a number of smaller scale research projects which have examined human remains. Jones et al. (2017) undertook a reassessment of the primary log-coffin burial in Milton Lilbourne G4, including sampling the individual for radiocarbon dating, whilst the probable trumpet of worked human bone from Wilsford G58 has been radiocarbon dated by Booth and Brück (2020), as part of a wider project which has provided further evidence for the curation and manipulation of human remains in the Early Bronze Age. English Heritage (Vincent and May 2010) have undertaken a thorough assessment of the age, sex and condition of all of the human remains from the Stonehenge landscape held in museum collections, although it is unfortunately difficult to link their findings back to the primary museum collections.

Other research projects accessing the Early Bronze Age collections have invariably focused on grave goods. Principally among these has been the Leverhulme-funded project reexamining Early Bronze Age Grave Goods from across Britain (Woodward and Hunter 2011; 2015). Between the two volumes 245 objects from the Wiltshire Museum Collections are discussed, principally examined macroscopically or under low magnification, providing an excellent synthesis of current thought, and updated interpretations of a huge variety of grave good categories. A number of objects discussed by Woodward and Hunter have received subsequent research or discussion: Wallis (2014) convincingly disputes the interpretation of wristguards as being a falconry tool, whilst the gold-studded bush barrow dagger hilts have been a particular focus of research in the past 10 years (Corfield 2012; Standish 2020; Papadimitiou et al. 2021; Figure 4.2-3). This has included analysis of trace leadisotopes in order to identify a source of the gold, as well as experimental reproduction as part of renewed interest in potential links between Mycenaean Greece and North Western Europe in the Early Bronze Age. There has been continued interest in arguing for an interpretation of the sheet-gold lozenge of Bush Barrow and related artefacts as being in some way a calendar (Maumene 2017), whilst the Chalcolithic gold 'sun-discs' have recently been comprehensively reviewed as part of a larger European study (Gerloff 2016).

Objects not discussed by Woodward and Hunter have also been consulted during the review period. Frieman (2014) has examined the

two Early Bronze Age flint daggers held in the collections as part of a national survey, whilst there has also been two very distinct takes on the Museum's collection of miniature funerary vessels. The first, by Jones and Brück (Jones 2012; Brück and Jones 2018) approaches the vessels from an extremely theoretical perspective, discussing how the materiality of the vessels may have been experienced and what this may have meant to those who experienced them. The second, taken by Copper (2017) in their Mphil thesis, is a much more traditional contextual and typological analysis of the vessels. Recently, there has also been a great deal of interest in evidence of metal working amongst grave assemblages, often incorporating use-wear analysis (Boutoille 2019; Tsoraki et al. 2020), and the Museum is currently awaiting the publication of one such large-scale project, Beyond the Three Age System (University of Leicester n.d.) as well as the long-awaited results of Shell's research into the 'Shaman' metalworker's burial, first reported over 20 years ago (Shell 2000).

4.2.2 Research projects and publications

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Papadimitiou, N., Konstantinidi-Syvridi, E., and Goumas, A. (2021) A demanding gold-working technique attested in Armorican/Wessex and Early Mycenaean funerary contexts, *Bulletin de l'association pour la promotion des reserches sur l'age du bronze* 19, 26-33.

Parker Pearson, M., Sheridan, A., Jay, M., Chamberlain, A., Richard, M.P., and Evans, J. (2019) *The Beaker people: isotopes, mobility and diet in Prehistoric Britain,* Oxford: Oxbow.

Standish, C. (2020) *Lead isotope analysis of a gold-wire stud from Bush Barrow,* Unpublished report: University of Southampton.

Tsoraki, C., Barton, H., Crellin, R.J., Harris, O.J.T. (2020) Making marks meaningful: new materialism and the microwear assemblage, *World Archaeology* 52, 484-502.

University of Leicester, n.d., *Beyond the three* age system, <u>https://le.ac.uk/archaeology/research/new-</u> <u>approaches-to-the-material-world/beyond-the-</u> <u>three-age-system</u> [accessed 5/5/2022].

Verkooijen, K.M. (2014) *Tears of the Sun: Bronze Age amber spacers from Britain and Europe,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Exeter. Wallis, R. (2014) Re-examining stone 'wristguards' as evidence for falconry in later prehistoric Britain *Antiquity* 88, 411-424.

Woodward, A., and Hunter, J. (2011) An examination of prehistoric Stone Bracers from Britain, Oxford: Oxbow.

Woodward, A., and Hunter, J. (2015) *Ritual in Early Bronze Age Grave Goods*, Oxford: Oxbow.

4.3 Research priorities

The Early Bronze Age collections are consistently the focus of high-quality research at the highest level, however a number of observations can still be made. A notable feature of the research undertaken into the Museum's Early Bronze Age collections between 2010 and 2021 is a comparative lack of PhD and Masters-level research; of the 27 projects identified by this project just two were theses: Verkooijen (2014) and Copper (2017). On the whole research has been dominated by established researchers often working as part of large-scale, well-funded research projects, and whilst this is not necessarily a negative point, it is in marked contrast to other periods and raises a question as to why, but also what the Museum can do to encourage wider engagement with these collections amongst post-graduate students.

In terms of priorities and opportunities for future research projects, the most glaring absence in the above body of research is the lack of interest in the ceramics of this period, excepting miniature vessels. The results of the Beaker People Project quite substantially compresses the chronological scheme for Beaker vessels suggested by Needham (2005), and it remains to be seen if this will lead to subsequent projects reviewing the chronology of Collared Urns, or domestic beaker assemblages. Such a project would require a national review, although the Museum's collections could be incorporated into a pilot or case study. Projects which may finally lead to the publication of the Avebury G44 and Bishops Cannings G61/62a excavations should also be encouraged.

Unfortunately, despite the interesting results of Wilkin's (2011) literature-based based review of deliberate inclusions of animal remains in Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age graves, it is doubtful that a more detailed research project could be built off of its back. Reflecting the attitudes identified by Banfield (2018) in the Neolithic (see 3.2.1), it is doubtful that a significant proportion of the animal bone assemblages are extant. This lack of interest in the material is reflected in the discrepancy between the descriptions of a probable collection of burnt animal remains deposited under a food vessel at Snail Down in the preliminary report (Thomas and Thomas 1955) and the deposit of "greyish soil" described in the final publication (Thomas 2005: 27). As further recent excavation archives are deposited however, this may be a theme that could be explored.

Table 1: Table showing the correspondence between Human Remains, Funerary vessels, and other grave goods in the collections. Abbreviations: MV= Miniature vessel; B= Beaker; FV= Food vessel; CU= Collared urn; O= Other/Unknown.

Site	Human	Vessel	Grave
	remains		Goods
Amesbury			Yes
G11			
Amesbury			Yes
G15			
Amesbury		MV	
G19			
Amesbury		MV	
G19a			
Amesbury		В?	Yes
G39			
Amesbury G4			Yes
Amesbury			Yes
G41			
Amesbury			Yes
G46			
Amesbury			Yes
G48		-	
Amesbury		В	Yes
G51			
Amesbury		В	Yes
Amochum/			Voc
Amesbury			res
Amoshury	1		
G57			
Ann Hill	C		Vas
Avebury G13c			Yes
Avebury G23c		N/1\/	Vec
Avebury G55		MV	Yes
Bishops			Yes
Cannings			105
G11/12			
Bishops	1		
Cannings G61			
Boynton G4a		MV	

Site	Human	Vessel	Grave
	remains		Goods
Bromham G2	С	MV	Yes
Charnage		MV	
Furze			
Codford G4b	I		
Codford G5	С		
Collingbourne			Yes
Ducis G21c			
Collingbourne			Yes
Ducis G4			
Collingbourne	С	B, MV	
Kingston G23b			
Collingbourne			Yes
Kingston G4			
Collingbourne	С, І	B, MV	Yes
Kingston G6			
Collingbourne	С	В	Yes
Kingston G8			
Durrington			Yes
G14			
Durrington		B, MV	
G36			
Durrington			Yes
G47			
Durrington		MV	
G65c			
Durrington			Yes
Sarsen Burial			
Edington G2			Yes
Figheldean	I	B, FV	Yes
G25			
Kilmington G1			Yes
Kilmington		В	
GZa			
Knighton			Yes
Down Barrow			

Knook G1a			Yes
Larkhill Camp	1		
Mere G6a		В	Yes
Milston G3/7			Yes
Milston G51			Yes
Milton	С	MV	
Lilbourne G4			
Milton	С	CU	
Lilbourne G5			
Monkton		MV	Yes
Down			
Netheravon	1	В	Yes
Flying School			
а			
Netheravon	1	В	
Flying School			
b			
Norton			Yes
Bavant G2			
Preshute G1a		MV,	Yes
		CU	
Roundway	1		Yes
G5b			
Roundway G8	1	В	Yes
Roundway G9	1	В	
Sack Hill	1		
Shrewton			Yes
G1/2/3			
South Newton			Yes
G1			
Sutton Veny			Yes
G11a			
Sutton Veny			Yes
G11c			
Upavon Flying	1	В	
School			
Upton Lovell			Yes
G1			
Upton Lovell			Yes
G2			

Upton Lovell			Yes
		N 41 /	Vaa
G2e		CU	res
Warminster			Yes
G10			
Warminster		MV	
G6			
West Overton			Yes
G1			
West Overton			Yes
G4			
West Overton		B, CU	Yes
G6b			
Wilsford G1		В	Yes
Wilsford G15			Yes
Wilsford G16			Yes
Wilsford G18			Yes
Wilsford G23			Yes
Wilsford G27			Yes
Wilsford G2b		В	
Wilsford G3			Yes
Wilsford G32			Yes
Wilsford G36f	1	MV	
Wilsford G38	С		
Wilsford G39	1		Yes
Wilsford G40		MV	Yes
Wilsford G42			Yes
Wilsford G43			Yes
Wilsford G46			Yes
Wilsford			Yes
G47/49/50a			
Wilsford G5			Yes
Wilsford G51	1	В	Yes
Wilsford G52	1		Yes
Wilsford G54	1		Yes
Wilsford G56			Yes
Wilsford G58			Yes
Wilsford G60			Yes
Wilsford G62		В	

Wilsford G64		Yes
Wilsford G65	FV	Yes
Wilsford G7	MV	Yes
Wilsford G8	MV,	Yes
	CU	
Wimbourne	CU	Yes
St. Giles G17		
Wimbourne		Yes
St. Giles G18		
Wimbourne		Yes
St. Giles G19		
Wimbourne		Yes
St. Giles G20		
Wimbourne	CU	Yes
St. Giles G3		
Wimbourne	MV	Yes
St. Giles G33a		
Wimbourne	0	Yes
St. Giles G4		
Wimbourne		Yes
St. Giles G8		
Wimbourne		Yes
St. Giles G9		
Winterbourne	В	
Stoke G10		
Winterbourne	FV	Yes
Stoke G13		
Winterbourne	MV	Yes
Stoke G14		
Winterbourne	MV	
Stoke G16a		
Winterbourne	FV	Yes
Stoke G28		
Winterbourne		Yes
Stoke G4		

		Yes
I		
	CU	
	0	Yes
	В	Yes
		Yes
	MV	Yes
	FV	
		Yes
	MV	
	MV	
	CU	Yes
		Yes
	MV	Yes
	MV	Yes
	MV	
		I

5.1 Summary of the Collections

5.1.1 Archaeology

In contrast to the extremely rich Early Bronze Age collections, the Museum holds relatively little material for the Middle Bronze Age and initial phase of the Late Bronze Age (1,600- c. 1,000 BC). This, in part, probably reflects a change in focus away from the Stourhead Collection's emphasis on the Stonehenge landscape, and towards the Vale of Pewsey and North Wiltshire Downs. Extensive wetlands in the Vale appear to have acted as a barrier to settlement prior to the Late Bronze Age (Tubb 2011), and the only sites on which Deverell-Rimbury period ceramics have been found were both excavated during the Marlborough Downs project, at Dean Bottom and Bishops Cannings Down (Gingell 1980; 1992). These settlements also produced a small amount of Middle Bronze Age metalwork and other material culture, including a fragmentary dirk and palstave at Bishops Cannings Down.

The Museum holds just 31 palstave axeheads, mostly historic chance finds with imprecise provenances, whilst the number of Middle Bronze Age dirks and rapiers is negligible. A large proportion of the Middle Bronze Age metalwork held by the museum also appears to have been deposited much later in the period. For instance, eight palstave axeheads were deposited as part of the Late Bronze Age hoard of socketed axeheads at Manton Weir Farm (Lawson 2011), whilst the Middle Bronze Age blade deposited with the Melksham hoard of phalerae and spearheads in the Earliest Iron Age was presumably already centuries old (Gingell 1979; Osgood 1995). An exception to this is a hoard of metalwork from Heywood, in the west of the county, which was recently acquired through the treasure process (2019T488). This hoard comprised of Taunton phase material (c. 1,400-1,200 BC), and included a palstave, quoitheaded pin and liss-style bracelet more commonly seen in Hampshire or Nothern France.

The collections are similarly limited in relation to the Ewart Park phase (c. 1100-800) metalwork, contemporary with the Late Bronze Age. The Museum holds just 42 socketed axeheads attributable to this phase, most with similar issues of provenance to the palstaves held in the collections. Almost half of these axeheads come from two hoards deposited at Manton Weir Farm (Lawson 2011), although it has been argued that one of these hoards was deposited at the transition to the Llyn Fawr metalworking phase (c. 800-600), contemporary with the Early Iron Age (see Boughton 2015, **5.2**).

By far the most significant assemblages held in the collections dating to this period derive from the excavations of a number of 'midden' sites, especially around the Vale of Pewsey. These sites include Potterne (Lawson 2000), East Chisenbury (McOmish et al. 2010), All Cannings Cross (Cunnington 1923), and more limited excavations at Stanton St. Bernard (Barrett and McOmish 2009). An unpublished assemblage of contemporary pottery from Roughridge Hill, Bishops Cannings, potentially suggests a further midden at this site (Robinson and Swanton 1993). These sites are characterised by colossal build-ups of artefactrich dark earth, often large enough to be mistaken for topographical features (e.g. McOmish et al. 2010). Ewart Park metalwork was found at both Potterne (Lawson 2000) and

All Cannings Cross (Cunnington 1923) implying that activity had began by the tenth century BC. The midden sites are typically understood as the result of periodic feasting events, which cumulatively created extensive deposits rich in ceramics and animal bone, as well as metalwork and other material culture.

In particular, the sites are known for a distinctive form of decorated Post-Deverell-Rimbury ceramics often referred to as All Cannings Cross type wares, and which is characteristic of the Earliest Iron Age in the region (Barrett 1980) and it is on the basis of the absence of later scratch-cordoned wares that it is assumed the middens were out of use by sixth or fifth century BC (Morris 2000; Raymond 2010, Tubb 2011). The exception has previously been All Cannings Cross, where the presence of La Tene I and II brooches suggests that activity at that site may have continued into the Middle Iron Age (Cunnington 1923; Adams 2013; Waddington et al. 2019), however, recent radiocarbon dating has shown that the lives of middens may have been much longer than previously thought (see Waddington et al. 2019, 5.2). Notwithstanding a lack of clarity in terms of stratigraphy in Cunnington's original publication of All Cannings Cross (Cunnington 1923), these sites, represent a nationally important group which are vitally important in our understanding of the Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age transition in Southern Britain. It is little surprise that they have been the focus of significant academic attention (McOmish 1996; Bradley and McOmish 2006; Serjeantson 2007; Tullet 2008; 2010; Tullet and Harrison 2008; Tubb 2011; Waddington 2010).

The above are not the only assemblages dating to this period in the collections, and the Museum holds a substantial number of site assemblages dating to the Early and Middle Iron Age (c. 800-100 BC), although most derives from historic excavations. The settlement at Battlesbury Bowl, Warminster, is an exception, and the only site to have been excavated since 1990. The ceramic sequence at the site dates occupation to c. 800-300 BC (Ellis and Powell 2008), and in addition to the ceramics, a well stratified assemblage of animal bone and other material culture also survives from the site. In particular, the animal bone assemblage from Battlesbury Bowl represents one of the largest of this period in the country (Hambleton and Maltby 2004), further complementing the substantial assemblages from Potterne and East Chisenbury.

Cow Down, Longbridge Deverill, in the west of the county, is another useful assemblage as although the excavation was undertaken in the mid twentieth century, its publication has occurred only relatively recently (Brown 2012). Excavations identified a series of roundhouses associated with All Cannings Cross-type vessels, which were then superseded by a series of pits containing ceramics datable to Middle Iron Age transition (Brown 2012). Despite the relatively early date of the excavations, substantial quantities of animal bone are held by the Museum from this site, along with the substantial ceramic and smaller metalwork assemblages. The other sites dating to this period in the Museum collections were excavated in the early 20th century, and whilst lacking the stratigraphic detail of more recent excavations, they nonetheless collectively represent an excellent resource for the study of this period: these include Swallowcliffe Down (Clay 1927), Fifield Bavant Down (Clay 1924), Chisenbury Trendle (Cunnington 1932b), Lidbury Camp (Cunnington 1919) and Figsbury Rings (Cunnington 1927), as well as the earliest phases

of occupation at Casterley Camp (Cunnington and Cunnington 1913).

Other assemblages within the Museum collections still await full publication, such as a small assemblage from Upton Cow Down, Westbury, and the material from Grimes' excavation of Scratchbury Camp. Finally, an important, if poorly understood, assemblage of early iron age material, including a rare iron socketed axehead, was excavated by Nan Kivell at Cold Kitchen Hill (Nan Kivell 1926; 1926). Unfortunately, the publication of this site is well known for being extremely lacking in detail, and no original records survive.

5.1.2 Human remains

In addition to the material discussed above, the Museum also holds a small, but still significant, collection of human remains. Most notably among these are the human remains from Potterne, which were mostly disarticulated, and Battlesbury Bowl. The Museum also holds human remains from All Cannings Cross, East Chisenbury, Lidbury Camp and Cow Down.

5.2 Research summary

5.2.1 Summary

The Museum's Early and Middle Iron Age collections are substantial, and the material sees a considerable amount of academic interest. Although typically not as high profile as the research into the Early Bronze Age, in terms of the number of research projects and the number of results fed back to the Museum, this period has a larger profile. It is also notable that it receives interest from researchers at a greater variety of stages in their academic career.



Figure 5.1: Dr Richard Madgwick examines animal bone from Potterne.

Research into the Pewsey middens drives the lion's share of interest in this period. In particular, the work of Dr Richard Madgwick and his colleagues and students at Cardiff University into animal bone from these sites has been significant (Figure 5.1). These studies range from more traditional zooarchaeological studies at MSc level (Simms 2019; Figgitt 2019), through to the novel application of macroscopic and microscopic surface analyses (Faillance et al. 2020; Madgwick 2014; 2016; Madgwick and Mullville 2012; 2015) and scientific analyses of isotopic evidence (Madgwick et al. 2012). The substantial animal bone assemblage from Potterne has also been successfully employed in two aDNA analyses: both as a control in a study of goat domestication (Daly et al. 2018), and in a study of the distribution of ancient mice species in Europe (Rodriguez 2019). Waddington et al.'s (2019) recent use of Bayesian modelling on radiocarbon dates obtained using samples of animal bone and ceramic residues from East Chisenbury is particularly significant, and has



Figure 5.2: Map showing the distribution of key sites mentioned in the text. Image contains Ordnance Survey data, crown copyright 2022.

completely altered our understanding of the site's development, extending activity at the site far later than was previously thought.

The artefactual middens from Potterne and the other midden sites have also been accessed, although not to nearly the same extent as the animal remains. The only dedicated study of material from these midden sites has been Brück and Davies' (2018) study of shale armlets from Potterne, discussing the potential for deliberate breakage as part of the feasting activity on the site.

Other studies to utilise the Museum collections in this period have typically been part

of much larger national or international surveys of particular artefact categories, such as metal working debris (Webley et al. 2020), glass beads (Foulds 2014), quoit-headed pins (Lawson 2019) and loomweights (Shaffrey 2017). Adams (2013; forthcoming) has discussed a number of brooches in the collections dating to this period, and has recently been able to use the well recorded assemblage from Battlesbury Bowl in a radiocarbon dating project to help refine their dating. Hermann et al.'s (2020) survey of prehistoric balance arms in Europe has identified a new example from Potterne, previously identified as a bobbin, which is now only the second known in the UK, both reinforcing the importance of the site, as well as demonstrating the variety of activities which took place there.

There has been a small number of projects researching particular categories of metal artefact. Boughton (2015) has examined the socketed axeheads in the collections as part of a national study of Early Iron Age axehead forms. On the basis of the composition of one of the Manton Wier Farm hoards, which she argues contains multiple axeheads form the same mould, she suggests that the group was likely deposited at the cusp of the Early Iron Age, and is an important transitional hoard. In addition, Lee (2014) and Fregni (2014) have examined Bronze Age tools in the collections, investigating what they can tell us about ancient woodworking and metalworking respectively.

Finally, and as with the Early Bronze Age, human remains from a number of sites have been sampled for radiocarbon, isotopic and aDNA analyses, the first results of which are beginning to be published (Patterson et al. 2021). Whilst grand narratives of genetic shifts are undoubtedly attention grabbing, simply having this corpus of up-to-date radiocarbon dates is extremely useful for our understanding of sites, and will undoubtedly inform future research.

5.2.2 Research projects and publications

Adams, S. (2013) *The first brooches in Britain: from manufacture to deposition in the Early and Middle Iron Age,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Leicester.

Adams, S. (in prep.) Setting artefacts free

Boughton, D. (2015) *The early Iron Age axes of Britain,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Central Lancashire.

Brück, J., and Davies, A. (2018) The Social Role of Non-metal 'Valuables' in Late Bronze Age Britain, *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 28, 665-688.

Daly, K., Mullin, V., and others (2018) Ancient goat genomes reveal mosaic domestication in the Fertile Crescent, *Science* 361, 85-88.

Faillance, K.E., Foody, M.G.B., and Madgwick, R. (2020) Exploring the potential of TEM analysis for understanding cooking at prehistoric feasting sites *Scientific Reports* 10, 13635.

Figgitt, J. (2019) Black earth sites: an investigation of two late Bronze Age/early Iron Age midden sites, All Cannings Cross and Stanton St. Bernard, Vale of Pewsey, Wiltshire, Unpublished MSc thesis: University of Cardiff.

Foulds, E. (2014) *Glass Beads in Iron Age Britain: A Social Approach,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Durham.

Fregni, E.G. (2014) *The compleat metalsmith: craft and technology in the British Bronze Age,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Sheffield.

Hambleton, E. (2013) The life of things long dead: A biography of Iron Age animal skulls from

Battlesbury Bowl, Wiltshire, *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 23, 477-494.

Hermann, R., Steinhoff, J., Schlotzhauer, P., and Vana, P. (2020) Breaking News! Making and testing Bronze Age balance scales *Journal of Archaeological Science* 32, 1-18.

Lawson, A.J. (2019) Quoit-headed pins: A consideration of the type in the light of Norfolk examples, *Norfolk Archaeology* 48, 155.

Lawson, A.J., Robinson, P., and Swanton, G. (2011) Bronze Age metalwork from Manton Copse, Preshute, Wiltshire, *WANHM* 104, 31-43.

Lee, R. (2014) Influences of wood-crafting on technological development in Middle to Late Bronze Age Southern England, Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Southampton.

Madgwick, R. (2014) What makes bones shiny? Investigating trampling as a cause of bone abrasion *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 6, 163-173.

Madgwick, R. (2016) New Light on feasting and deposition: exploring accumulation history through taphonomic analysis at later prehistoric middens in Britain, *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 8, 329-341.

Madgwick, R., and Mulville, J. (2012) 'Investigating Variation in the Prevalence of Weathering in Faunal Assemblages in the UK: A Multivariate Statistical Approach' International Journal of Osteoarchaeology 22, 509-522.

Madgwick, R., and Mulville, J. (2015) Reconstructing depositional histories through bone taphonomy: extending the potential of faunal data, *Journal of Archaeological Science* 53, 255-263.

Madgwick, R., Mulville, J., and Stevens, R. (2012) Diversity in foddering strategy and herd management in late Bronze Age Britain: An isotope investigation of pigs and other fauna from two midden sites, *Environmental Archaeology* 17, 126-140.

Patterson, N., Isakov, M., Booth, T. [and others] (2022) Large-scale migration into Britain during the Middle to Late Bronze Age, *Nature* 601, 588– 594.

Rodriguez, L. (2019) *Comparative phylogeography as an integrative approach to understand human and other mammal distributions in Europe,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Bournemouth.

Shaffrey, R. (2017) 'A re-investigation of British stone loomweights' in Shaffrey, R. (ed) *Written in stone: papers on the function, form and provenancing of Prehistoric Stone objects in memory of Fiona Roe,* Highfield Press, pp. 229-248.

Simms, A. (2019) Food for feasts: analysis of animal husbandry regimes and carcass processing at two late Bronze Age/early Iron Age middens in the Vale of Pewsey, Wiltshire, Unpublished MSc thesis: University of Cardiff.

Waddington, K., Bayliss, A., Higham, T., Madgwick, R., and Sharples, N. (2019) 'Histories of deposition: creating chronologies for the Late Bronze Age–Early Iron Age transition in Southern Britain' *Archaeological Journal* 176, 84-133.

Webley, L., Adams, S., and Brück, J. (2020) The Social Context of Technology: Non-Ferrous Metalworking in later Prehistoric Britain and Ireland, Prehistoric Society Research paper 11, Oxford: Oxbow.

5.3 Research priorities

Research into the osseous assemblages of this period are consistently producing extremely interesting results, be it recent research into human aDNA, or the ongoing research into the animal bone assemblages of midden sites led by Dr Richard Madgwick and the FeastNet project. Beyond noting that it is hoped that some of the smaller-scale pilot studies will be applied to larger samples (e.g. Madgwick 2015; Faillance et al. 2020), this document has little to add. What is clear, however, is the obvious benefits of the successful working relationship the museum has been able to build with Dr Madgwick in terms of driving long term research interest. This has included both post-doctoral research, but also research at a PhD and MSc level, and building similar such relationships with other researchers and institutions should be seen as a priority.

The museum would also like to encourage research projects which utilise the wider assemblages from Potterne and other midden sites. As Brück and Davies (2018), and Hermann et al.'s (2020) research demonstrate, varied avenues are left to be explored. In particular, there has been very little use of the substantial ceramic collections associated with this period identified in this study. Waddington et al. (2019) have sampled preserved residues on ceramic sherds from East Chisenbury, whilst prior to this Copley et al. (2005) had sampled ceramics from Potterne for lipid analysis. Whilst further scientific analyses would be welcomed, it is especially felt that in light of the recent redating of East Chisenbury a study of the chronology of the All Cannings Cross Ware ceramic industry is now long overdue (Tubb 2011: 195). Whilst the Danebury excavations provide an excellent type series for regional Early Iron Age ceramics (Cunliffe 1984), it has now been over 40 years since Barrett's (1980) review

of Late Bronze Age ceramics. Both were completed prior to the publication of Gingell's (1992) Marlborough Downs Project and the excavations of either Potterne (Lawson 2000), or East Chisenbury (McOmish 1996; McOmish et al. 2010). Barrett noted the apparent lack of an initial 'plain' series of Post-Deverill-Rimbury fabrics bridging the gap between Middle Bronze Age Deverill-Rimbury Wares and Early Iron Age All Cannings Cross-type fabrics in the region. Similarly, the unexpectedly late sequence of dates at radiocarbon East Chisenbury (Waddington et al. 2019) asks questions of our understanding of their later currency, and raises the possibility of a longer chronology at Potterne than has previously been assumed. The absence of Scratch-cordoned bowls at these sites cannot be seen as a reliable chronological indicator in light of Waddington et al.'s (2019) work, as is indeed also suggested by their relative scarcity on a number of sites known to have been occupied in this period, for instance at Cow Down, Longbridge Deverill, where they are noted as being almost totally absent (Brown 2012), as well as others (Cunliffe 1984: 254). Unexpectedly late radiocarbon dates were also encountered at Battlesbury Bowl, where the final phase of burials was much later than was implied by the Middle Iron Age ceramics in their grave fills and the site more generally (Ellis and Powell 2008: 40-42). Together this suggests there continue to be gaps in our understanding of the local ceramic sequence.

The increasing evidence for later occupation at the midden sites around the Vale of Pewsey also now increases the range of contemporary overlap with a number of the Early to Middle Iron Age settlements excavated during the twentieth century. Unfortunately, these site archives have seen little to no use in recent research. The result of this is that for display purposes the museum holds a number of interesting site assemblages dating to this period, but only a very crude understanding of both the development of the sites from which they were excavated, but also a largely nonexistent holistic understanding of how all of these sites interacted on a landscape scale. As such the Museum would like to encourage research projects which can further develop our understanding of these sites, and whilst in some cases fieldwork may be beneficial, for example Foulds et al.'s (2014) geophysical survey on Swallowcliffe Down, as Guido and Smith's (1981) identification of Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age ceramics amongst the finds assemblage from Figsbury Rings demonstrates, there will be value in simply returning to the surviving material archives. Similarly, unpublished archives such as that from Scratchbury Camp, and the field walked assemblage from the probable midden at Bishop's Cannings both also await analysis and publication.

6. Late Iron Age and Roman (100 BC - AD 410)

6.1 Summary of the Collections

A substantial portion of the Collections are made up of objects relating to the Later Iron Age and Romano-British periods; records attributed to these periods make up around a quarter of all archaeological records on the collections management database. Arguably, this is the most disparate group of material in the collections, as there is no clear geographical focus for the assemblages, nor any one significant assemblage to form a nucleus for the collections relating to this period. Many of the most exciting recent discoveries of Romano-British archaeology in Wiltshire have typically been the result of development in the Amesbury and Swindon areas, both outside of the Museum's collecting area. More-so than other periods, the temporary pause on collecting archaeological archives between 2013 and 2022 also appears to have had a notable effect on the collections, with a number of potentially significant assemblages from as far back as the early 2000s awaiting deposition.

Despite this, probably the most significant individual object held in the Museum Collections outside of the Early Bronze Age dates to this period: the Marlborough Bucket (Figure 6.1). The bucket was discovered during gravel digging in St. Margaret's Mead, Marlborough, in 1807, and eventually acquired by the Wiltshire Museum in 1878 (Cunnington 1887). The bucket was apparently discovered intact, and contained cremated human remains. It survived for just long enough that sketches could be made before it fell to pieces, the state in which it was received by the museum amongst a 'box of broken urns and various fragments' (Cunnington 1887: 224). Although initially enigmatic and dated to the



Figure 6.1: The Marlborough Bucket.

Roman period based on surrounding discoveries, the date of the vessel is now firmly established as being Late Iron Age, and one of a number of funerary buckets found in Britain dating to this period (Stead 1971), and arguably one of the finest known. Yet, despite its huge archaeological and art-historical value, the last serious academic attention the vessel received was in the 1970s (Jope 2000), although this has recently changed (See Ellis 2021, **6.2.1**).

The most famous assemblage dating to this period may be that excavated at Nettleton Scrubb, initially by Priestly 1938-1954 and subsequently by William Wedlake over the course of the later 1950s and 1960s (Wedlake 1982). These excavations revealed a significant roadside settlement situated on the Fosse Way, and occupied throughout the Roman period. The site is best known for the long-lived shrine dedicated to Apollo identified on the site, with multiple phases of construction, but it is also notable for the considerable evidence for industrial production in the second half of the fourth century. This included only the second *in situ* pewter vessel workshop excavated in the country (Lee 2009). Unfortunately, the archive is divided between the Wiltshire Museum and Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, and the Museum holds only the material relating to Priestly's earlier, smaller scale, excavations, yet this still equates to a moderately sized and varied collection, including c. 1,000 sherds of pottery, stone carvings and a copper alloy cockerellshaped candle holder.

In addition to Nettleton, significant roadside settlements are also known at Cunetio, near Marlborough, and Verlucio, near Calne, both on the main east-west road connecting Bath and Silchester. Unfortunately, neither settlement is well understood. Verclucio remains the only unscheduled defended Romano-British roadside settlement in Britain (Linford et al. 2018), and remains unexcavated. The Museum holds a large assemblage of field-walked ceramics collected from within the enclosed area, as well as a large assemblage of metaldetected finds from an area immediately to the east of the defended area. Neither assemblage has been analysed or published in its entirety. Cunetio, another defended site, is particularly notable for the apparent preservation of the site, as well as for the later phase of its defensive circuit. This was constructed c. 360-380, and is of a scale and style that implies a central authority was involved in its construction (Corney 2001; Mattingly 2006: 333; Gerrard 2013: 43ff). The Museum holds the paper and material archive associated with relatively small scale, and largely unpublished, excavations ran by F.K. Annable and J.A. Clarke between 1957 and 1964 (WAM 1959; 1960; 1962; Annable 1966), including a

relatively large ceramic assemblage. The archive deriving from more recent excavations within the town by Wessex Archaeology and Time Team (Wessex Archaeology 2011) will soon hopefully be deposited with the Museum. In addition to the excavated material, the Museum also holds a number of artefacts attributed to Cunetio from the prolific collector Jonathon Brookes, who had himself excavated a well within the town in 1912 (Brooke 1920).

The large assemblage of Romano-British material recovered during iron ore extraction at the Westbury Iron Works between 1877 and 1882 is evidence for a further significant, yet poorly understood, settlement occupied during this period (Cunnington and Goddard 1934: 175ff). The assemblage contains a large collection of ceramics, particularly early Roman, as well as iron tools, jewellery, and a collection of first or second century copper alloy vessels which probably derive from a single deposit comparable to the Kingston Deverill Hoard. Elsewhere in Westbury, excavations by amateur archaeologist Lt.-Col. Shaw between 1959-1964, discovered further evidence for Romano-British settlement at Wellhead Lane (Rogers and Roddham 1991). Shaw's excavations were unsystematic and the extant material is extremely selective, yet a sizable assemblage remains.

The Museum also holds the archives derived form the excavations of a number of villas around the county, and in particular the archives from Castle Copse, Great Bedwyn (Hostetter and Howe 1997), Atworth (Erskine and Ellis 2008), and the villa or possible shrine at Box (Brakspear 1904; Hurst et al. 1987). Collectively, these represent a valuable collection of material, however, there are issues with all of the archives. In particular, no animal bone is extant form the excavations of Castle Copse, whereas the animal bone assemblage from Atworth had already become mixed by the early 1990s (Bourdillion 1991), limiting its usefulness. Similarly, with the exception of the Samian, the location of the 24,000 sherds of pottery excavated at Atworth (Timby in Erskine and Ellis 2008), one of the largest assemblages in the county, is unknown. Despite this, an interesting collection of small finds, ceramics, glass and structural stonework is extant from the three sites. The Museum also holds finds assemblages from Time Team's limited excavations at Tockenham Villa, including sculpted stone spout from a probable bathhouse, and Swindon Archaeological Society's unpublished excavations at Stanton Park Villa. Finally, the Museum also holds the assemblage extremely large from the excavations of Littlecote Roman Villa, 1978-91, however, the documentation associated with this assemblage is minimal, and a considerable project would be required to make the archive accessible.

The other material dating to this period largely derives from relatively small-scale excavations of rural settlements, with few notable exceptions. As with the above, the quality of the contextual information, and the completeness of the archives varies hugely from site to site. Perhaps two of the most notorious in this regard are Nan Kivell's excavations of Stockton Earthworks (Nan Kivell 1926b) and Cold Kitchen Hill (Nan Kivell 1925; 1926). The former is classified as a as a nucleated agricultural settlement, or 'village', by the Rural Settlement of Roman Britain project (Allen et al. 2018), and Cold Kitchen Hill has already been mentioned (5.1) for its Early Iron Age occupation, but in the Roman period, also became the site of a suspected shrine or temple. Large, but poorly documented finds assemblages survive from both sites, but unfortunately, the archaeological recording of these sites was below the standard even of the day, and little survives beyond sketches of notable finds, either published or in the Museum archives. In addition to the material excavated by Nan Kivell at Cold Kitchen Hill, the Museum also holds a number of collections related to the site, including the artefacts derived from an earlier excavation by Goddard (1894). A huge collection of brooches in particular attributed to Cold Kitchen Hill.

Unsurprisingly, the Museum also holds material deriving Maud and Ben Cunnington's excavations of hill forts and similar monuments in the early 20th century which can be dated to this period. Late Iron Age and Roman period occupation was identified at Withy Copse, on the north side of Martinshell Hill (Cunnington 1909; 1910b), Casterley Camp (Cunnington and Cunnington 1913), and Knap Hill, although the evidence from the latter site is later than the former two (Cunnington 1911; Conah 1965). A further poorly understood assemblage derives from Shaw Mellor's excavations of three large barrows in Colerne Park in the north west of the county (Shaw Mellor 1954). The barrows, whose exact location are not now known, were found to be of Roman date, with large quantities of material from the first to fourth century recorded. Shaw Mellor (1954: 338) speculated that the largest of the mounds may have served of the foundation for a building, but was ultimately unable to explain the site. The RSRB tentatively classifies the site as a shrine, although with little confidence (Allen et al. 2018). The extant assemblage comprises of ferrous and non-ferrous metalwork and a poorlyquantified ceramic assemblage.

Relatively more recent excavations include the substantial collection of material attributed to Fowler's excavations of Overton Down XII, in 1966-8, a fourth to fifth century rural settlement at which a number of buildings were identified (Fowler 2000). A substantial portion of the c. 11,000 sherds recovered during the excavations are extant, as is a large collection of vessel glass and glass beads. Unfortunately, none of the animal bone from the site seems to have been retained. At Chapperton Down, an extensive nucleated settlement was partially excavated by Wessex Archaeology (Malim and Martin 2007). The site was constructed along the line of a major trackway between Bath and Salisbury, and occupied over the third and fourth centuries; the Museum holds a substantial finds assemblage from the site, and as would be expected from a modern excavation, this includes the animal bone, environmental samples and ferrous metal which has not consistently survived from earlier excavations. A small assemblage of both ceramics and animal bone also survives from Wessex Archaeology and Time Team's excavations at Beach's Barn, a rural settlement occupied throughout the Romano-British period, but preceded by Middle-Late Iron Age occupation (Wessex Archaeology 1995; Harding 2007). Roman settlement was identified at Black Furlong, Calne, where a late Roman corndrier/malting oven was excavated, along with a pair of fourth century graves (Phillips 2010). The site is suspected to have had a religious function based on the presence of a possible coin hoard, a number of unusual brooches and miniature socketed axeheads found previously on the site (Moorhead 2001; 2010). A short distance away, a potentially significant deposit of pewter and ceramic vessels was also discovered (WAM 1989; Partridge, in press). Further assemblages associated with rural settlement include those from excavations at Easton Grey, Bratton, near Westbury (Luckett 1981), and Cumberwell (Amadio et al 2011), as well as largely unpublished assemblages from Manor Farm, Allington, and Ashton Keyes (*WANHM* 1972: 173), all of which with very limited publication and discussion.

Finally, the Museum also holds assemblages derived from the excavations of the Minety and Brinkworth tile kilns, as well as the early Roman pottery kilns at Column Ride, associated with the Savernake ceramic industry.

6.2 Research summary

6.2.1 Summary

The Late Iron Age and Romano-British collections, relative to the proportion of the total collections that they represent, are probably the most under-utilised area of the collections, except for the almost total absence of interest in the much smaller Medieval and Post-Medieval Collections (8.2.1). The majority of the objects from these periods accessed are chance finds, and the vast majority of studies have been primarily typological in focus (e.g. terrets, Lewis 2014; beads, Foulds 2014; brooches, Booth 2015; seal-rings, Marshman 2015; Brancastertype seal-rings, Gerrard and Henig 2017; metal figurines, Durham 2010; 2014; Loomweights, Shaffrey 2017; glass bangles, Ivleva 2020; pewter vessels, Partridge, in press; tiles, Locke, in prep.). Whilst these typological studies are undoubtedly important and valuable pieces of research, they rarely provide detailed new information on the sites or objects accessed, typically, rather, providing revised or refined dating or classification. Only a single researcher has undertaken a reconsideration of a site from this period using material and archives held in the collections (Partridge 2022).

By far the stand out piece of research undertaken for this period has been Ellis' (2021)

recent re-examination of the Marlborough bucket. Through a detailed art-historical analysis of the figurative and zoomorphic decoration of the vessel, Ellis has been able to present exciting new interpretations of the bucket and its historical context, as well as producing highquality photographs which will aid in future research and display.

6.2.2 Research projects and publications

Booth, A. (2014) *Reassessing the long chronology* of the penannular brooch in Britain: exploring changing styles, use and meaning across a millennium, Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Leicester.

Durham, E. (2010) *Metal figurines in Roman Britain,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Reading.

Durham, E. (2014) 'Style and Substance: some metal figurines from South-West Britain' *Britannia* 45, 195-221.

Ellis, R. (2021) *The Marlborough Bucket: Breakdown*, Unpublished report.

Foulds, E. (2014) *Glass Beads in Iron Age Britain: A Social Approach,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Durham.

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6.3 Research priorities

The disparate nature of the collections, and the lack of serious academic attention of the Later Iron Age and Romano-British periods makes identifying a clear focus for future research impossible. Despite the lack of key sites driving research, the summaries published in Ellis (2001), and especially the work of the Rural Settlement of Roman Britain project (Allen et al. 2018), ensure that general patterns of occupation in this period are, relatively, well understood during this period.

Possibly the most valuable in terms of increasing the future research potential of the collections would be projects which improve our knowledge of previously unpublished (or summarily published) site assemblages within the collections. These include sites such as near Westbury, Bratton, Allington, near Chippenham, and Ashton Keyes, near the Gloucestershire border, none of which feature in the Rural Settlement of Roman Britain Project database. At the latter site in particular, a smallscale rescue excavation in advance of gravel extraction, multiple larger-scale excavations have continued in the immediate area, such as Cleveland Farm and Dixon's Gate, which provide ample opportunity for the site to be placed in its regional context. Similarly, projects centred around the Littlecote Roman Villa archive would be extremely beneficial, although it must be stressed that this would represent an enormous project. The Museum's modest collection of human remains from this period is similarly under-published, yet an assessment carried out as part of this project demonstrates that sufficient skeletal material survives for many of these individuals to merit further study, and may be particularly useful for smaller-scale student osteological projects.

The Museum would like to see its ceramic assemblages from this period be more widely utilised by researchers. Greenwood's (2020) recent use of lipid analysis on Roman ceramics in the Cirencester Hinterlands, demonstrates the applicability of scientific methods usually reserved for other periods. Further studies in this vein may themselves be interesting, perhaps comparing the results of the Thames and Bristol Avon valleys with the chalk

uplands, where agricultural regimes differed at this time (Rippon et al. 2015). A number of ceramic industries are known to have operated in and around Wiltshire at this time, particularly in the north of the county (Anderson 1979), although a growing number of kiln sites and local fabrics have been identified in the region (e.g. Corney et al. 2014). Whilst the Gloucester and Cirencester fabric series' are applicable in the north, the reporting of Romano-British ceramics in Wiltshire is inconsistent between different archaeological units and sites (personal observation). The value of studying regional coarse-ware fabrics is increasingly recognised, but such studies require comparable datasets (e.g. Rippon 2017; Rippon and Gould 2021; Timby 2017). The development of a fabric type series for Wiltshire housed at the Museum would be an excellent opportunity to better utilise this aspect of the Collections, improve wider reporting, and ensure that Wiltshire Museum becomes embedded in regional Roman archaeological research.

The Museum also encourages further material culture studies, particularly those that apply scientific methodologies, such as pXRF analysis, and take a holistic view of assemblages as a whole, rather than examining individual objects outside of the context of their wider assemblage. In particular, the large assemblage of Iron Age and Roman brooches from Cold Kitchen Hill may be appropriate for such a study. The results would complement those of Bayley and Butcher (2004) concerning the brooches of the Roman fort at Richborough, Kent, and may provide interesting comparisons in terms of both typological classes and alloys used, especially considering the proximity of the site to the Mendips, considered to be region in which many types were produced.

7. Early Medieval (c. 410-1066)

7.1 Summary of the Collections

The Museum's Early Medieval collections are relatively small, but have the benefit of being dominated by a group of recently excavated, and well-published, sites. The evidence if firmly focused on the Early and Middle Saxon periods (c. 410-900), with much less in the way of material attributable to the Late Saxon period, aside from some individual objects. It is likely that some of the Saxo-Norman ceramics from Ludgershall Castle, and similar sites, will date to the tenth or early eleventh centuries, however these are discussed together with their wider assemblage (**8.1**).

The main strength of the Museum's Early Medieval Collections are the archives associated with the excavations of three Early Saxon cemeteries: Collingbourne Ducis (Gingell 1978), Blacknall Field, Pewsey (Annable and Eagles 2010), and Grove Farm, Market Lavington (Williams and Newman 2006). Although the full deposition of the archives is yet to occur, the excavated area at Collingbourne Ducis has recently been significantly expanded (Dinwitty and Stoodley 2016), and an Early to Middle Saxon cemetery at Barrow Clump, Figheldean, has been excavated in a number of phases since 2010 (Figure 7.1) Osgood et al. 2019). Even excluding these soon-to-be-deposited archives, the Museum holds remains relating to c. 180 inhumations dating to between the fifth and seventh centuries, with in excess of 70 more inhumations to be deposited, as well as a much smaller number of cremations. In addition to the human remains, the archives also obviously contain diverse assemblages of grave goods, including weapons, shields, dress fittings, vessels, and even a yew bucket.



Figure 7.1: A yew bucket with copper alloy fittings, from Barrow Clump, part of a small collection of artefacts from the site already deposited with the museum.

In addition to these more recent excavations, two burials discovered during antiguarian barrow exploration also held by the Museum, are of note. These are the burials from Woodvates and Roundway Down, both excavated prior to 1850. Both burials are associated with a rich suite of grave goods, including jewellery (Figure 7.2), and at Roundway Down, the fittings from another yew bucket. Although the ironwork from neither burial survives, the contemporary descriptions strongly suggest that both were also deposited in a wooden structure, such as a bed or coffin. Both appear to be further examples of highstatus late-seventh century female burials, part of the same phenomenon as the much better known Swallowcliffe Down Bed Burial, in the south of the county (Speake 1989), and that from

Collingbourne Ducis (Dinwitty and Stoodley 2016), the latter soon to be deposited with the museum.

The material relating to settlements held by the Museum is less noteworthy, but is nonetheless of considerable research value, doubly so as the two main settlement sites, Grove Farm, Market Lavington (Williams and Newman 2006), and Cadley Road, Collingbourne Ducis (Pine et al. 2001), are at least in part contemporary with the corresponding cemetery site. At Cadley Road excavation uncovered ten sunken feature buildings and one possible postbuilt structure, with occupation dating to the Early Saxon period and continuing into the Middle Saxon period. The material culture from the site is extremely rich, with large and wellpreserved assemblages of both ceramics (1,400 sherds) and animal bone (Pine et al. 2001). The evidence from Grove Farm is similar. At this site three Sunken-Feature Buildings and a possible post-built structure were excavated, along with a number of pits and ditches associated with the settlement. These features produced a slightly smaller assemblage of 1,200 Early to Middle Saxon sherds, along with another large animal bone assemblage (Williams and Newman 2006). The wider small finds assemblages from both sites is more modest, but nonetheless contains interesting material, such as a number of composite bone comb fragments from Cadley Road.

In addition to these two sites, a further Early Medieval settlement assemblage derives from Haslam's excavations of Ramsbury in the 1970s (Haslam 1980). Ramsbury is particularly notable for a detailed sequence of Middle Saxon ironworking furnaces, and with them considerable quantities of metalworking debris (although only a small sample was retained) and iron tools. Early Medieval settlement evidence elsewhere is more limited, such as the assemblage from Wellhead, Westbury (Fowler



Figure 7.2: A necklace from the Roundway Down Saxon burial.

1966) which principally comprises of just 89 sherds of pottery.

7.2 Research summary

7.2.1 Summary

Research interest in the Early Medieval collections has been relatively limited, but represents a good variety of research projects, with particular interest in the human remains. Leggett (2020) has sampled remains from Collingbourne Ducis for a study combining multiisotopic analysis with machine learning in order to investigate diet and mobility in Early Medieval populations, with these remains used previously by Venn (2017) as part of an MSc thesis, reevaluating the age and gender of individuals in the cemetery based on skeletal and grave good evidence. A further study utilising isotopic analysis of human remains had been planned, but was cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. Holmes (2020) has undertaken a detailed reassessment of the animal bone assemblages from Cadley Road, Market Lavington and Ramsbury, providing an assessment of the extent of the assemblage, and the economy of the sites. With this being followed by some radiocarbon dating by McKerracher (2022) as part of the FeedSax project. The final research project identified, and the only project to focus on material culture, was undertaken by Moradi (2019) as part of their MRes thesis, which examined anthropomorphic and zoomorphic depictions on jewellery from Blacknall Field, Pewsey, as part of a study of potential totemic and shamanic beliefs in Early Medieval Wessex and East Anglia.

Although outside of the timeframe of this project, the Museum is eagerly awaiting the final publication of a programme of geophysical

survey and excavation led by Semple and Williams (2001) on Roundway Down. This project had aimed to precisely locate the location of the burial and add new context. In addition to the new archaeological information, it is also hoped that this publication will raise awareness of the burial, with there being very few readily available published discussions.

7.2.2 Research projects and publications

Holmes, M. (2020) *Case study summary report: Wiltshire Sites*, Unpublished report.

Leggett, S. (2020) *Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you who you are': A Multi-Tissue and Multi-Scalar Isotopic Study of Diet and Mobility in Early Medieval England and its European Neighbours,* Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Cambridge.

McKerracher, M. (2022) Radiocarbon dating of zooarchaeological remains from excavations at Market Lavington, Wiltshire, Unpublished report.

Moradi, L. (2019) Animal and human depictions on artefacts from early Anglo-Saxon graves in the light of theories of material culture, Unpublished MRes thesis: University of Exeter.

Venn, R. (2017) The age and gender identities of older individuals buried at the Anglo-Saxon cemetery of Collingbourne Ducis: A holistic study utilising grave goods and a life course approach. Unpublished MSc thesis: University of Durham.

7.3 Research priorities

The collection of human remains associated with this period is well utilised, however, the collection of animal remains attributed to this period sees far less use. Holmes' work assessing the principal assemblages could be used as a starting point for more detailed assessments, and in particular the application of isotopic and other methods of analyses as undertaken by Madgwick et. al. on later Prehistoric assemblages (see **5.2**). It is hoped that the FeedSax project or associated research will lead to such studies.

The Museum would also like to encourage smaller scale projects which would be

more appropriate for individual student-level research. In particular, the museum would like to see projects which can make much wider use of its collection of grave goods, either through materials analysis, or through more theoretical discussions. For instance, Moradi's (2019) thesis demonstrates that a variety of perspectives beyond traditional discussions of ethnicity and identity can be explored through this material, with these latter concepts increasingly out of favour in modern scholarship (e.g. Harland 2019).

8.1 Summary of the Collections

8.1.1 Archaeology

By far the most significant assemblage of Medieval material in the Museum's collections is that excavated by Peter Addyman and his students between 1964 and 1972 at Ludgershall Castle (Ellis 2000). These excavations produced a varied, well-preserved and well-recorded finds assemblage which includes architectural fragments, fixtures and fittings, dress accessories and an exceptionally well-preserved assemblage of vessel and painted-window glass. Significantly, the excavations produced a huge assemblage of 47,000 sherds (570kg) of pottery, with the assemblage dating from the tenth century to the end of the medieval period and beyond. The ceramics are dominated by local coarse wares, but fabrics from across Wiltshire are represented, although imports are relatively rare. In addition to the ceramics and wider finds assemblage, the Museum also holds a substantial collection of animal remains from Ludgershall Castle, although these were not discussed in the eventual publication of the site. It must also be noted that the museum does not hold the complete archive, which is divided between the Wiltshire Museum and Historic England.

The Museum holds two significant comparably dated assemblages, although in neither case is the scale comparable to that at Ludgershall. The first was excavated at Chapel Meadow, Ramsbury (also referred to as Membury), by Grimes in 1941. The excavations have never been published, but revealed a complex of building foundations beginning in the twelfth century and originally interpreted as a castle (Grimes in O'Neill 1948), but now thought to represent a fortified manorial site (Creighton 2000). Around 9,000 ceramic sherds are held by the Museum, with a relatively small collection of small finds and animal bone also attributed to the site. Grimes' site records are still held by the Museum, and an attempt was made by Hilary Heally to publish the site in the 1990s, although she sadly passed away prior to the project's completion. The second assemblage was excavated by Thompson at Huish parish church, and in the field immediately to the north (Thompson 1967; 1972). These excavations revealed evidence of buildings and workshops dating to the twelfth to fifteenth centuries and produced a stratified assemblage of c.1000 sherds as well as an interesting collection of ironwork and other finds, including multiple tools, locks and keys, and a well-preserved steelyard weight and balance arm with surviving mechanism (Shortt 1968). The original site records were similarly reportedly deposited with the Museum (Thompson 1972), although they have not been located at the time of writing.

Other assemblages dating to the Medieval period mostly comprise of small collections of material, largely derived from small-scale excavations and evaluations from within modern settlements. Such sites include: Wooton Bassett High Street (Currie 1995), Postern Mill (Currie 1993) and the Old Cinema (Hart and Holbrook 2011), both Malmesbury. The excavations at New Park Street, Devizes, by UCL (Russell 1993) uncovered just 300 medieval ceramic sherds, from badly disturbed deposits, however the site represents the Museum's principal collection of Post-Medieval ceramics, with c.1200 sherds attributed to this phase. The assemblage from this site is otherwise fairly limited. Additionally, the Museum holds a relatively large quantity of material from various excavations around Cricklade carried out during the second half of the 20th century, where the ceramic sequence probably dates to the ninth to thirteenth centuries. Aside from the Late Saxon ceramics (Jope in Radford 1972), the pottery has never been discussed in detail, and indeed does not appear to have been retained in the case of Haslam's 1975 excavations. An assemblage of metalwork attributed to the latter excavation was not described as part of the eventual publication (Haslam 2003).

In addition to the settlement evidence, the museum also holds the archives from the excavations of two Medieval or Post-Medieval tile kilns. The first, and more significant, site is that from the Naish Hill Kilns (also called Nash Hill), near Lacock (McCarthy et al. 1974). These excavations revealed a stratified sequence of tile and pottery kilns dating to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and recovered an assemblage of over 9,000 pottery sherds. The assemblage includes an exceptional dragondecorated jug, as well as a large assemblage of both decorated and undecorated tiles, and more utilitarian pottery. At the time of excavation, the British Museum attempted to scientifically link the tiles to those from Stanley Abbey, but their results were inconclusive. Stamps from the kiln are present at both Stanley and Lacock Abbeys, whereas some of the tiles produced at Naish Hill have no local parallels, but are recognised at sites such as Glastonbury Abbey. By contrast, the non-ceramic finds assemblage was described by the excavator as 'meagre in the extreme' and was mostly unstratified (McCarthy et al. 1974: 106); it doesn't appear to have been retained.

A second kiln site, as well as associated buildings, was excavated at Langley Burrell, Chippenham, by Dr. Ron Wilcox and Chippenham Technical College students in 1978-

9 (HER: ST97NW459). These excavations produced an extremely large assemblage of artefacts which are now in the Museum's collections, although the site has never been published and the finds have never been described or even given basic quantification. The assemblage includes a large quantity of pottery relating to the kilns, but also a wider assemblage of animal bone, small finds, worked flint and iron working debris. Vince (1984) has briefly described the fabric and suggests that the kilns can be dated to the late fifteenth to early sixteenth century based on analogy with the nearby Musty industry, although he also notes a mid/late-fourteenth century archaeomagnetic date from one of the kilns, and suggests that many of the forms from Langley Burrell are known in other fabrics from the fourteenth century. Unfortunately, no original records from the excavation survive in either the Wiltshire Museum or Historic Environment Record archive (although some material may be present within the Chippenham Museum).

The Museum also holds a small representative sample of material attributed to the Minety Kilns, although the majority of material from Musty's (1973) excavations are now in the collections of Swindon Museum and Art Gallery. The identification of a 'kiln' at Hunt's Mill, Wooton Bassett, based on a small assemblage of sherds found in the late nineteenth century is described as dubious by Vince (1984).

8.1.2 Human remains

The Museum holds only an extremely limited collection of Medieval and Post-Medieval human remains, from just two of poorly dated chance finds. They are noted due to their potential to contribute to studies of Medieval health. The first, from Spittlefield, Marlborough, was buried in a stone coffin and may relate to a fourteenth century leper hospital on the same site (Annable 1965), the second is a group of at least five individuals buried 'without special care' in a trench in Ramsbury (Burchard 1966).

8.2 Research summary

8.2.1 Summary

The research output generated by the Medieval and Post-Medieval Collections since 2010 has been relatively minor, and has predominantly focused on individual objects: A seventeenth century trade token issued by Thomas Walford of Kingswood (prior to 1844, a detached part of Wiltshire) was photographed for a catalogue of Gloucestershire tokens (Frith et al. 2022), a Post-Medieval copper alloy Reißscheiben ingot was described as a parallel for a recent metaldetector find (Martinón-Torres et al. 2018) and a curb-bit from Ludgershall Castle has recently been described in greater detail by Clarke (2020). A detailed re-examination of the funerary achievement of Sir Thomas Long, acquired from Draycott Cerne Church, Sutton Benger, has greatly improved our understanding of the group's production and date, but also revealed that one is a rare and important survival of a fifteenth century Milanese armet, which is unlikely to have originally been part of the achievement (Dobson in prep.).

In addition to these projects, ceramics from the Naish Hill Kiln have been sampled for chemical analysis by Cotswold Archaeology in order to confirm whether the kilns are a source for a ceramic fabric identified on an archaeological site in Bristol (Gutierrez pers. comm.).

8.2.2 Research projects and publications

Clark, J. (2020) Curbing Horsepower: The Archaeology of Curb Bits in Medieval England – and Elsewhere, *The Horse in Premodern European Culture, Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Culture 70,* 177-192.

Dobson, C. (*in prep.*) Funerary Achievement, St James' Church, Draycot Cerne.

Frith, B., Gray, I., Rhodes, J., Neufville Taylor, J., Thompson, R. and Everson, T. (2022) Gloucestershire Seventeenth-century tokens, Powys: Galata.

Martinón-Torres, M., Benzonelli, A., Stos-Gale, Z., and Henry, R. (2018) Argentiferous copper extraction and post-medieval metals trade: identification and origins of postmedieval Reißscheiben ingots found in Wiltshire, England *Historical Metallurgy* 52, 38-47.

8.3 Research priorities

Similar to the Late Iron Age and Roman collections (6.3), the disparate nature of the Medieval and Post-Medieval collections makes identifying a coherent scheme of research priorities difficult.

The key priorities would be projects that would lead to the publication of site assemblages, or elements thereof, which have previously received no attention. The archive associated with Grime's excavation at Membury, for instance, requires description, as does the animal bone assemblage from Ludgershall Castle. As the recent research by Clarke (2020) demonstrates, the exceptional finds assemblage from Ludgershall, as well as from Huish, should also be able to contribute to research into Medieval material culture, and the Museum would like to encourage such projects.

The most obvious resource from the Medieval collections is the substantial and well stratified ceramic assemblage from Ludgershall Castle, complemented by assemblages from Huish, Membury, Naish Hill, and other, smaller, excavations. Together, with the ceramics from the Langley Burrell and Minety Kilns, these assemblages cover the entirety of the Medieval period, as well as the Late Saxon and Post-Medieval periods, and thus provide an excellent opportunity to produce a Wiltshire Medieval fabric type series. Historic England currently provides funding for the creation of a similar type series in Somerset (SWHT 2021) and the Museum would proactively encourage projects which may lead to the creation of such a resource which would become a valuable resource for researchers and professional archaeologists alike, as well as firmly embedding the Museum's collections within regional archaeological research for the period.

A similar study could be constructed around the Museum's collection of encaustic tiles from Naish Hill and Ludgershall Castle, supplemented by other tiles in the collections from sites such as Langley Burrell, Stanley Abbey, Bradenstoke Priory and Malmesbury Abbey. Whilst unspecified tests to chemically link tiles from Naish Hill and Stanley Abbey reported in the initial publication were inconclusive (McCarthy et al. 1974), a study modelled on Warry's (2021) recent work with Romano-British tiles in the Exeter region may be valuable. Warry used 'broad-brush' pXRF testing in combination with more traditional typological and limited thin-section analysis to differentiate between the products of contemporary kilns in close geographic proximity. In addition to potentially differentiating between different tile-sources, if not necessarily provenancing them all, such a project would also act as a further test case for Warry's methodology, as there are serious limitations in the precision and suitability of pXRF for provenancing ceramics (Hunt and Speakman 2015). Such a study would be at an appropriate scale for a Masters-level project.

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