MORTIMER WHEELER ARCHAEOLOGICAL LECTURE

CADBURY-CAMELOT: A FIFTEEN-YEAR PERSPECTIVE

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I

IT is very fitting that a series of lectures established in honour of Sir Mortimer Wheeler should include one on the Cadbury-Camelot excavations, and I am personally most grateful for the opportunity to record his large contribution to the success of that work. I had served an important part of my own archaeological apprenticeship under him at Mohenjo-daro and Stanwick. Consequently, when it was suggested to me, as Director of Excavations for the Camelot Research Committee, that he should be invited to serve as President of the Committee, I warmly welcomed the proposal, though I had no illusions that he would be a mere figurehead. In the event, he only once intervened in the day-to-day running of the excavations when, at the end of the 1966 season, he urged me to begin a cutting across the innermost rampart which I had intended leaving until the following year. On two memorable occasions, he brought his heavy guns to bear on the Committee; each time, I am glad to say, in support of the Director's own strategy and budget. Above all, by his energetic quest for funds, and by his personal influence with grant-giving institutions, he ensured that there were fully adequate resources to carry that strategy through to a successful conclusion. Finally, as editor of the 'New Aspects of Antiquity' series, he made it possible for me to present a very lavishly illustrated summary of our results within two years of the end of the excavations.[1]

Given the fullness of that summary, it might seem that I can add little in the course of an hour's lecture, even if I confine myself to the 'Arthurian' aspects of Cadbury. Some of my statements will indeed seem familiar to anyone who has read the 1972 summary. This is a tribute to the way in which my field colleagues kept both observation and interpretation fully up to date during the four

[1] Alcock (1972).

digging seasons. In writing this paper, however, I have re-examined all the relevant evidence, and so I can now present some major reinterpretations. Even more important, our whole picture of the archaeology and history of Post-Roman Britain has been revolutionized over the last dozen years, as a result of the publication of major new syntheses, critical studies, and excavation reports. I myself have investigated four royal centres of the sixth to eighth centuries AD in northern Britain; and indeed, in personal terms, the sub-title of this paper could as well be 'the four-hundred mile perspective'.

I must begin, albeit briefly, with Camelot and Arthur. In the 1972 summary I explained how my views on these two topics had developed since my appointment as Director of Excavations in 1965. About Camelot, as an invention of French poets in the later twelfth century, I have nothing new to say. As the first recorded name for Cadbury Castle by South Cadbury, it remains a valuable term for distinguishing that particular Cadbury from those by Congresbury or Tickenham or above Exeter. As such, I shall continue to make use of it.

The Arthur of history is another matter. Whatever value my essay in source-criticism may have had in 1971, it has been largely swept away by the studies of Drs Dumville, Miller, and the late Kathleen Hughes. Largely, but not, I think, entirely; and certainly the debate is too large to enter into here. But I must first observe that an open discussion is not helped when the words of deceased scholars are misrepresented, or when Latin texts are shrouded in arcane mystery by being described as 'Celtic sources'. To this I would add three positive comments. Gildas's *De excidio* demonstrates that the western Britons had an interest in history, however defective it may have been in technical terms. Secondly, the *Annales Cambriae* date for the battle of Badon is independent of any chronology which might reasonably have been deduced from Gildas. Thirdly, until we can explain why the *Annales* were set out in the form of a Great Cycle, we remain ignorant of the basic purpose of the document. It must therefore be unwise to dismiss absolutely any of its entries as unhistorical.

At present, however, my position on the historicity of Arthur is one of agnosticism, and for the present I shall discuss Cadbury-Camelot without Arthur. If anyone wishes to protest that this is the equivalent of discussing the archaeology of Troy without Priam or without Homer, I can only recommend them to read the Mortimer Wheeler lecture given by one of my distinguished precursors, Professor Moses Finley.

But if I am not to write of 'Arthurian' Cadbury, how should I identify the relevant period? 'Cadbury in the middle first millennium AD' is reasonably accurate, but altogether too cumbersome. Taking a further hint from Troy, to which Cadbury has often been compared, not least by Wheeler himself, I shall categorize it by a structural and cultural phase number: Cadbury 11. This is precise in itself, and it serves as a reminder that at Cadbury we uncovered one of the longest stratified sequences in Britain, or for that matter in western Europe. Out of a span of four millennia, we shall be looking here at little more than a single century. This is the moment to recall, however, that one thrust of our excavation strategy was that we should deal fairly and impartially with all phases of the site, with no bias towards the fifth and sixth centuries AD. The other major thrust, of course, was to redress the balance between the excavation of the defences and that of the interior. In this respect Cadbury has now been spectacularly surpassed by Professor Cunliffe's excavations at Danebury, but in the late sixties this was a pioneering policy that was frequently misunderstood by visiting excavators. Strategy is necessarily influenced by the weapons available, and our exploration of the interior was certainly guided by our possession of a new instrument for geophysical survey which was both sensitive and unusually rapid in its operation.

II

To the eye, Cadbury Castle is a normal, albeit spectacular, multiple-ramparted hillfort of the southern British pre-Roman Iron Age (Pl. XXI). A brief excavation in 1913 had yielded appropriate pottery, as well as other pottery and metalwork which demonstrated further occupation in both the early and late Roman periods.[1] The first hint that the fort had also been used in the mid first millennium AD—the phase ultimately designated Cadbury 11—came when Dr Ralegh Radford recognized pottery of that date among surface collections made when the fort interior was ploughed in the 1950s.[2] This pottery, along with sherds from both the early Neolithic and the first millennium BC, had survived considerable ploughing and soil erosion. Subsequently, during the excavations of 1966–70, pottery of three major classes, all imported into Britain, was recognized: Class A, bowls of Phocaean and African Red Slip Wares; Classes Bi, Bii, and Biv, amphorae of Mediterranean origin; and Class D,

[1] Gray (1913). [2] Radford (1956).

grey-ware goblets and bowls from the Bordeaux region. Altogether, about a score of imported vessels can be distinguished.

The first significance of this pottery is, of course, that it provides a broad chronology for Cadbury 11.[1] The earlier pieces, of Phocaean Red Slip Ware (formerly Late Roman C), were dated on site by Dr John Hayes to *c.*460–70 AD. He has recently reaffirmed his dating for the relevant form of Phocaean Red Slip Ware, so we can take 460–70 as the actual date of manufacture, however much later the date of deposition on site may be. The Bi vessels appear to belong to an early type, with straight, not wavy grooving, and they should therefore be dated before 520 or 530 AD. The Bii amphorae occur in both an earlier form with closely-spaced ridging, and a later group with notably stepped ridging: again a late fifth- and early sixth-century date is indicated. The external dates for the imported pottery show therefore that Cadbury 11 could begin as early as *c.*460–70 AD, and that it certainly continues through much of the sixth century. As we shall see, a secondary phase, Cadbury 11B, can be dated to the later sixth century by a Saxon silver ornament. A date for the end of Cadbury 11 is suggested by the absence of pottery of Class E, which belongs to the seventh and eighth centuries. Since Class E imports occur in western Dumnonia and the south Welsh coastlands, but are absent from central and eastern Dumnonia, it appears that the latter area had undergone an adjustment of its trading contacts; and it is tempting to attribute this to the advance of Saxon colonization.

Few of the imported sherds came from significant layers. The majority of stratified pieces, thirteen in all, were in dereliction layers separating the Cadbury 11 defence (Rampart E) from the late Saxon mortared wall and bank (Rampart F) of Cadbury 12. In the fort-interior, sherds from one or two freshly broken Bi amphorae had been tamped into a wall slot of a large timber hall (Building L/1), and there was a weathered Bi sherd in a wall-trench of the minor building S/1. The make-up of the Cadbury 11 roadway in the south-west gate yielded a Bii fragment, and a Bi sherd may come from Rampart E itself, but in a disturbed area. This may not appear an impressive list, but it certainly represents a ceramic chronology which is wholly consistent with that established on structural grounds.

It is necessary here to emphasize the physical separation of the imported pottery from any traces of late Roman—that is, third- or fourth-century—activity. A major concentration of late Roman pottery was found in the make-up of Rampart E in a single trench

[1] Hayes (1972); (1980).

(Cutting J on the west side of the hill); but this is without parallel elsewhere in the circuit of the defences, and it has no causal connection with the building of the rampart. It represents the incorporation into the rampart-body of material which happened to be lying around in the vicinity, just as pottery of Cadbury 9 was incorporated even in the Cadbury 12 rampart, or, at Dinas Powys, pottery and metalwork of the sixth to eighth centuries were scooped up into the eleventh-century ramparts. There is not a single piece of Cadbury 11 pottery along with the late Roman material.

This is in marked contrast with Congresbury, where the mingling of Roman and imported pottery is considered to demonstrate a large overlap in the chronology and use of the two.[1] At Camelot, the physically separate distributions argue for a hiatus between phases 10 and 11. The latter must be regarded as a separate entity, owing nothing to the former. This incidentally is a powerful argument against the peculiarly Dumnonian heresy that the occurrence of late Roman pottery and coins in a hillfort entails an occupation in the period 400–700 AD.

To anyone accustomed to the quantities of pottery from later Iron Age or Romano-British occupations, the score of vessels from Cadbury 11 must seem meagre indeed, especially since there was no local pottery to swell the total of imports. To put the Cadbury figures in perspective, they can be compared with those from several broadly contemporary sites, on the basis of the extensive lists compiled by Professor Charles Thomas.[2] Of the sites quoted in Table 1, Alt Clut (Castle Rock Dumbarton) is described by Bede

TABLE 1: INCIDENCE OF POTTERY ON SELECTED SITES

	A	Bi+Bii	Other
Alt Clut	—	9	—
Cadbury-Camelot	3	15	—
Cadbury-Congresbury	7	21	—
Dinas Powys	9	8	—
Ecclesiastical: Iona	1	—	—
all other	1	2	—
Glastonbury Tor	—	5	—
Tintagel	36	24	—
Yeavering (Anglian)	—	—	4

The table gives the best available figures for the minimum number of vessels of Class A (Phocaean Red Slip Ware and African Red Slip Ware) and amphorae of Classes Bi and Bii. At Yeavering the figure is for vessels not in 'native' fabrics. Sources: Alt Clut, Cadbury-Camelot, personal observation; Dinas Powys, Alcock 1963, 125–33; Yeavering, Hope-Taylor 1977, 170–81; all others, Thomas 1981.

[1] Burrow (1979). [2] Thomas (1981).

as *civitas munitissima*; it lies at the northern limit of the Class B distribution. Dinas Powys is interpreted as a princely stronghold. Cadbury-Congresbury was probably a secular enclosure, but included also a shrine. Tintagel, formerly regarded as the outstanding example of an early Celtic monastery, has recently been reinterpreted as a secular site with impressive natural defences,[1] whereas Glastonbury Tor has good claims to be a monastery. Finally, I have included the Anglian *villa regia* at Yeavering to demonstrate how historical and architectural distinction may be associated with striking ceramic poverty.

Dr Burrow has rightly emphasized that the figures from Congresbury and Camelot are not strictly comparable, because of the different intensity of excavation, and especially the different strategies of the two excavations. In particular, at Cadbury, 'the selection of areas for excavation was not made on a basis of a sampling procedure for assessing the extent of the post-Roman phase, but in order to examine areas in which important structural and chronological sequences relating to the whole history of the site might be anticipated'.[2] Given this, a twofold difference in Class A between Cadbury and Congresbury, or a threefold difference in Class B between Cadbury and Tintagel, does not appear significant. The major observable discrepancy is with the Class A at Tintagel, and this must be explained in terms of the special character of that site.

A further general issue concerns the role of the Church. It has sometimes been suggested that the Church was the main beneficiary, and therefore probably the organizer, of the importation of wine in Class B amphorae. The participation of secular authority was seen as secondary. The reassessment of Tintagel has shifted the balance quite decisively away from the Church; but even before this, it was sufficiently clear that the imported pottery had been found far more frequently in forts and on other secular settlements than at churches and monasteries. Indeed the only historically known monastery which yields imported pottery is Iona, with a single fragment of African Red Slip Ware.

It has also been customary to treat this pottery, originating in the Mediterranean or in Western Gaul, as evidence for trade; principally in wine, but also perhaps in oil or even dry goods. Here we should remind ourselves that some historians of the period have cast doubts on the concept of trade or commerce, and have looked rather to patterns of gift-exchange. Without following them so far as to seek our models among stone-based economies in

[1] Burrow (1973), Thomas (1982). [2] Burrow (1981*b*), p. 108.

the Pacific Islands, we must recognize that the implications of the imported pottery do demand critical scrutiny. In particular, the diversity of the Bii vessels from any one Insular site is in striking contrast with the uniformity, extending over some hundreds of vessels, that characterizes the actual wine cargoes found on Byzantine wrecks. Such uniformity in containers is exactly what we should expect from an organized commerce. The variety of forms on British sites implies that, whatever we are seeing here, it is certainly not the relics of normal cargoes.

Another curious feature of the British site collections is that Class D is normally represented by one or at most two vessels on any one site; only at Dinas Powys are there as many as nine. This is sufficient to prove some form of contact with the Bordeaux region, but in itself it can hardly represent commerce. The Class D vessels must have been incidental to a trade in totally perishable goods. The most likely candidate for this is wine in wooden casks, bound not with iron hoops but withies.

III

With the date of Cadbury 11 broadly established, we can now turn to the structures of that phase, beginning with the refortification of the hill-top. This was one incident in the long structural history of the innermost rampart, Bank 1.[1] It must be remembered that this did not stand alone: outside it were three, and in places four, other banks, products of the massive fort-building activities of the pre-Roman Iron Age. Even today, these banks and the intervening ditches form a major obstacle course for a would-be attacker (Pl. XXII*a*). The natural steepness of the hill makes its own defensive contribution and helps to explain Leland's comment: 'truly me seemeth it is a mirackle both in Arte and nature'.

Unfortunately, the very steepness of the slope has accelerated the erosion of the rampart face, and this, in turn, has caused problems for the observation and interpretation of the defensive structures. For instance, the earliest Iron Age bank was originally over two metres wide, but in most of our sections only its rear toe is preserved. Moreover, the long structural sequence in Bank 1 has not helped preservation, because successive ramparts have been cut into their precursors, often mutilating front revetments of stone or timber.

[1] Alcock (1980*b*).

Rampart E, the defensive work of Cadbury 11, was built in part on the unstable base of a deep plough soil which had accumulated over the ruined Iron Age rampart during the Roman centuries. In its turn, it was partly preserved by the overlying Late Saxon bank, but its front had been much disturbed by the building of the associated mortared stone wall. This was especially true at the south-west gate. As a result of these forces of natural erosion and destructive development, no single section across Bank 1 gave a complete picture of the succession of ramparts, or of the structure of any one phase. The evidence throughout was piecemeal, and it is necessary to patch it together from all the available sections and plans in order to create a schematic or idealized version of each rampart. With these qualifications in mind, we can examine the evidence for Rampart E, which was best preserved in Cutting D on the south and Cutting I on the east of the perimeter (Pl. XXII*b*).

Evidence that Cadbury had been refortified after the Iron Age, but before the building of a Late Saxon *burh* wall, was obtained in the first few days of the 1967 season in a mechanically cut trench on Site D. The construction of the mortared wall of Ethelred's *burh* had left a spread of mortar on the eleventh-century ground surface. Beneath this, the humus which had accumulated during a long abandonment overlay the rubble core of a rampart, which in turn lay upon an earlier dereliction layer containing pottery and brooches of the mid first century AD. Apart from its stratigraphical position, no dating evidence was at first available for the rubble rampart core, but it seemed reasonable to assign it to the intermediate cultural phase which was represented by the imported pottery. Further work in 1967 and subsequent seasons elucidated the structural details of this rampart and confirmed its chronology. It was Rampart E, of Cadbury 11, a work of the late fifth and sixth centuries AD (fig. 1).

This rampart was between 4 and 5 m wide. In Cutting D there were traces of a ragged front revetment, and better evidence for a rear face which had been repaired in quite good dry masonry. This repair marks phase 11B. The best evidence for a front revetment was on Site I, where an eight-metre length, four courses high, was uncovered. This was a somewhat ramshackle dry stone construction, the work of builders who had long lost the skills of their Iron Age ancestors. Vertical gaps showed where upright timbers had stood, at distances ranging from 1.0 to 1.70 m apart. Not all these gaps went down to the bottom of the wall, so the uprights were evidently not earthfast, as they had been in Iron

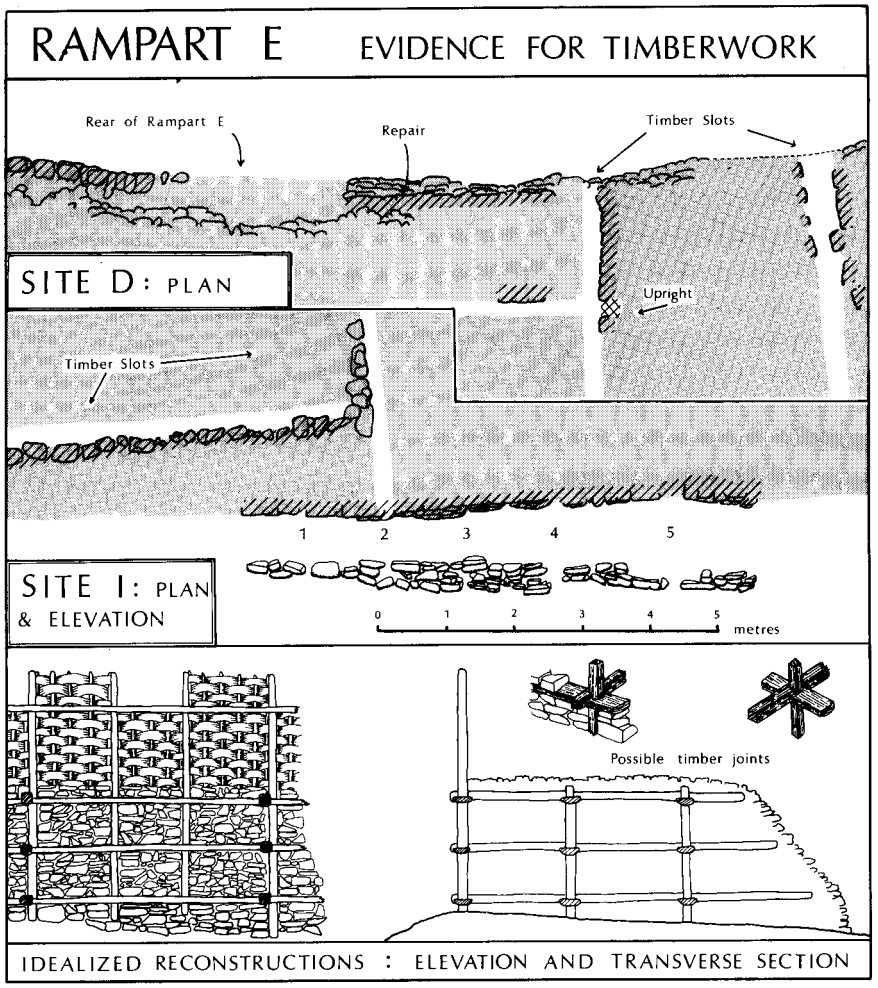


FIG. 1. The timber-laced rampart of Cadbury II

Age Ramparts A and B. At the south-west gate, however, where the stonework of Rampart E was better laid, the uprights were indeed earthfast (Pl. XXIII*a*).

Behind the face in Cuttings D and I it was observed that lines of squared stones, and even coursed walling, ran both parallel to the face and at right angles to it. At the intersection of these transverse and longitudinal lines on Site D was a setting for an upright post about 25 cm square. This post-setting and the stone lines show that the main structure of Rampart E was a timber framework, probably consisting of three or more triple ranks of longitudinal

beams, joined to short uprights, and fixed to the front revetment by transverse members at about 3 m centres. This jointed framework explains why the uprights did not need to be earthfast. Squarish stones were set against the timbers and as a front face, and the whole frame was then infilled with rubble. No nails were found, so the frame must have been secured by wooden pegged joints. We should not be surprised at the implied skill in carpentry, but it is useful to have this established before we have to consider the interior buildings of Cadbury 11. This timber-framed rampart may be seen as an interesting reminiscence of the Iron Age timbered ramparts of a thousand years earlier, or as a stark contrast with late Roman methods of fort-building in mortared stone and brick. But considered in itself, it is a most remarkable work on two counts: the building effort involved, and the technique of timber-framing.

To appreciate the effort, it must first be recognized that the Cadbury 11 refortification encompasses the whole perimeter of the Iron Age fort, nearly 1,200 m. It is the size of its defensive circuit which makes Cadbury-Camelot outstanding among contemporary British forts. The configuration of the Cadbury hill-top is such that it would have been easy to build a fort only a tenth this size, utilizing the internal scarp of the summit ridge as a natural defence on the west. This would have been quite in keeping with the norm for the period. It follows that the large size of Cadbury-Camelot must reflect the deliberate decision of its builders, and we must therefore take its size fully into account when we attempt to establish its purpose.

It was not, however, the length of the circuit alone which demonstrated a massive work-effort. Indeed, if the 14.5 km length of West Wansdyke was built by the Britons about the time of Cadbury 11, then a rampart less than one tenth as long would have presented no great task.[1] The timber framework is quite another matter. The nine longitudinal rows which have been suggested would have required over 10,000 m of stout planks or beams. For the transverse and upright beams a further 10,000 m would have been needed, probably in the form of dressed timbers about 20 cm square. Finally, light planks or wickerwork would have formed a breastwork. Without attempting to estimate the manhours required, it is certain that the hewing, carrying, dressing, and fixing of all this timber was a formidable task. It must be admitted, however, that it does

[1] For Wansdyke, Myres (1964); Burrow (1981*b*), p. 154.

not match the extravagant use of wood on many stone-and-timber fortifications in Central and Eastern Europe.[1]

The second remarkable feature of the Cadbury 11 rampart is that it is at present without parallel in post-Roman southern Britain, despite the popularity of various forms of timber-lacing in the pre-Roman Iron Age. Indeed, the importance of wood as a component in fort-building was still recognized in western Britain as late as the ninth century AD. The *Historia Brittonum* tells how Vortigern arrived 'in a mountainous place in which it was fitting to build a citadel'—itself an interesting reference to the significance of hill-top locations for fort-building. Having chosen his site, Vortigern then brought in craftsmen, specifically stonemasons; and then *ligna et lapides congregavit*, 'he gathered together timber and stones'.[2] Despite this, no timber-framed fortification is known in the post-Roman period in either south-west England, or Wales and the Marches, with the exception of Cadbury-Camelot.

In northern Britain, by contrast, at least five timbered ramparts have been dated between the fifth and ninth centuries AD. The most magnificent is the great Pictish fort of Burghead, where the inner ramparts of the upper and lower forts, a circuit of about 830 m, were about 7 m wide and up to 6 m high.[3] The arrangement of the timbers varied around the perimeter, but in the lower fort there were transverse oak beams, 15–20 cm square, fastened to stout longitudinal planks measuring about 8 by 30 cm. Some of these planks were set along the rear face of the rampart. In both horizontal and vertical planes the beams and planks were about 90 cm apart. It will be obvious how far my Cadbury reconstruction is based on these Burghead observations. There is, however, one striking difference, for at Burghead the timbers were fastened, not by wooden pegged joints, but by large spikes of iron.

Given the popularity of nailed timbered ramparts—the *murus gallicus*—in western Europe around the first century BC, it is remarkable that Burghead was the only Insular example known before 1976. Radiocarbon dates show that, far from being a work of the first century BC, it was not built before the fourth century AD at the earliest. A second example of a Pictish nailed rampart is now known at Dundurn.[4] This had been destroyed by fire, and the debris had then been dragged downhill, so that nothing is known of the details of the timber structure. The iron nails, the charred oak beams which they had fastened, and traces of wattle infilling, serve nevertheless to show its general character. A seventh- or

[1] See, for instance, Hensel (1969).
[2] Morris (1980), p. 70.
[3] Young (1891); (1893).
[4] Alcock (1981), pp. 168–71.

eighth-century date is indicated by radiocarbon assay from the oak beams.

There is a comparable radiocarbon date for a third excavated Pictish fort at Green Castle, Portknockie.[1] This had a framework of vertical, transverse, and longitudinal squared beams which had been mortised together but not nailed. Stones were then packed against the timber frame, which had been set up before the construction of the stone wall faces: another echo of Cadbury. Among the northern Britons there is evidence for timber work in the rampart face, tied back by transverse beams, at Mote of Mark and at Alt Clut, Dumbarton, both sites with radiocarbon dates in the fifth to seventh centuries AD. In each case, unfortunately, destruction by fire has removed any chance of establishing the details of the framework, but at Mote of Mark (and also at Burghead) there are hints that a range of wooden buildings backed on to the rampart.[2]

Does this contrast between the fort-building techniques of the southern Britons and those observed among the Picts and northern Britons mark a cultural difference, or does it merely reflect the haphazard nature of archaeological discovery? In fact, no simple generalizations cover either the reasons why forts of this period have been chosen for excavation, or the results of those excavations. For instance: among the northern forts, Mote of Mark was originally excavated in order to examine reported vitrifaction, and so the excavation was necessarily biased towards the discovery of timber-framing. Alt Clut and Dundurn were explored because of their documented history. Other forts, however, in both north and south, have been excavated because of their historical, or even legendary, associations with this period, but have yielded no evidence for timbered defences: examples are Castell Degannwy, Castle Dore, Dinas Emrys, Dunadd, and Dunollie. Some timbered forts, it can be shown, were founded on virgin sites, in or after the fifth century AD. Cadbury-Camelot, by contrast, was a pre-Roman foundation which was elaborately refortified after its defences had lain derelict for some four centuries. These observations reveal a problem: its solution will require evidence from many more post-Roman forts.

A further peculiarity of Rampart E is its use of Roman building materials: tufa blocks and tiles for core filling, and dressed masonry to provide a fair face against the transverse timber beams. Dressed Roman masonry is known to have been used in the dry

[1] Ralston (1978) and supplementary information.

[2] Mote of Mark: Longley (1982) and references. Alt Clut: Alcock (1981), pp. 157–9.

stone ramparts of the hillforts on Ruberslaw and Clatchard Craig.[1] In the latter case the masonry had been robbed from the vexillation fortress at Carpow, two miles distant, and then carried up to a height of 250 ft. At Ruberslaw, a stone-built signal station has been invented to provide a quarry for the stone, while at Cadbury the tufa, tiles, and masonry form part of the evidence for a Romano-Celtic temple, of which no architectural remains have ever been observed. At Congresbury there is much Pennant sandstone roofing tile, and some Roman brick, scattered over the site and incorporated in the ramparts. A probable source is the nearby temple in Henley Wood.[2]

This reuse of Roman building material, in an architecturally inappropriate manner, is part of the wide-spread occurrence of Roman bits and pieces on post-Roman sites, both British and Anglo-Saxon. A very remarkable instance is the discovery, at Dinas Powys in south-east Wales, of a shale core and a flint lathe-chisel from the manufacture of shale bangles at Kimmeridge in Dorset.[3] These objects can have had no utilitarian purpose at Dinas Powys. They seem rather to indicate a lingering respect for, or attachment to, things Roman in the imperial twilight of the fifth century. This concept may also explain the reuse of Roman building material. Where considerable effort was required to transport this to a hillfort, then some correspondingly strong motive must be invoked: perhaps to partake symbolically of the famed military prowess of the Empire. This is surely the case at Clatchard Craig, and it may also be true at Ruberslaw and Cadbury.

The south-west gateway was the other structural element of the defences which we examined (Pl. XXIV). Here nothing has emerged to modify the picture which I presented in 1972, so I can be brief. The main structure of the gate comprised four posts at the corners of a 10 ft (3 m) square. The posts were about 15 by 20 cm, and were set in pits that were deep enough to penetrate the loose infilling of the Iron Age hollow way down to the solid rock. Heavy threshold beams linked the posts at the front and rear of the gate, while the rampart ends were shored up by planks. At ground-level we can infer two double-leaved doors, pivoting in sockets in the threshold beams and the lintels. The solidity of the corner posts suggests that the rampart walk had been carried across the slight hollow of the gate passage on a bridge, and a light tower is quite

[1] Ruberslaw: Curle (1905). Clatchard Craig: Alcock (1980*a*), p. 80.
[2] Fowler, Gardner, and Rahtz (1970).
[3] Alcock (1963), pp. 23–5.

possible. Through the gate ran a metalled road, which had been repaired after a late sixth-century silver ring had been lost. This repair, like the refurbishing of the rear face of Rampart E, marks phase 11B. The historical implications of this will be considered later.

Because of the limited extent of excavation on post-Roman forts in Britain and Ireland, there are no good contemporary parallels for the Cadbury gate. Some Irish ringforts, such as Garranes, Ballycatteen, and Garryduff I, have quite elaborate entrance arrangements, but they cannot be construed as gate-towers. None the less, literary evidence from Ireland shows that, in the latter part of the first millennium, it was expected that a fort would have some kind of chamber above the gate. The only archaeological example that I know is at the curious promontory crannog of Cuilmore Lough II, where there was a 2 m square setting of four massive posts at the centre of the defensive line.[1]

Four-post gates, carried up as towers, are, however, well known in Roman auxiliary forts.[2] Since they are mostly of the first century AD, with only a few Antonine examples, it is difficult to believe that they could have provided a model for Cadbury 11. Indeed, the most continuous lineage for single-portal timber gate-towers is represented not by four-posters, but by gates with six posts. This runs from early Roman through Carolingian and Ottonian on the Continent, and reappears in a Norman context in south Wales.[3] At present, the Cadbury 11 gate-tower stands alone, as a locally devised and thoroughly satisfactory means of controlling entry to the fort.

IV

In turning now to the excavations within the defences, I would recall our proposed strategy of redressing the balance between the examination of the defences and that of the interior of a hillfort. As it happened, the extreme complexity of the defence sequence demanded a larger share of effort than had been intended. In compensation, our comprehensive geophysical survey guided us to the location of major buildings which could then be examined very economically. It also led us to concentrate on the central plateau where—contrary to the received doctrine that occupation would be confined to the lee of the rampart—some fifteen hundred years of human activity had been focused.

[1] Rynne and MacEoin (1978).
[2] Manning and Scott (1979).
[3] Uslar (1964).

From our first season of geophysical survey at Easter 1967, we were able to predict the whereabouts of major buildings, attributable both to the pre-Roman Iron Age and to the post-Roman occupations, whether British or Saxon. What criteria had we in 1967 for sorting the geophysical indications into one period or the other? Essentially we worked on the simple formula: round buildings are pre-Roman, rectangular ones are post-Roman. It was already recognized that there were some rectangular buildings in Iron Age Britain, and Cadbury had its quota of them. None the less, the first half of the formula is broadly true. The second half is more questionable, and indeed a recent survey of the Irish evidence reveals that the transition from round to rectangular buildings was taking place over the very centuries with which we are concerned.[1]

In the case of Saxon buildings, all the evidence available in 1967 showed that, both on the continent and in England, from the pagan period through to the late Saxon, these would be rectangular.[2] From British sites, however, the evidence was less clear-cut. At Pant y Saer there were circular stone houses with rectangular annexes. At Buiston crannog there was a round or oval wooden house, and at Gwithian little oval rooms of drystone. Drainage gullies at Dinas Powys suggested a round-ended hall with thick drystone walls, which may have been preceded by a rectangular post-built structure. Rectangular post-built halls, each with its own special features, had been reported from Castle Dore and Doon Hill.[3] The overall picture appeared to be that in backward areas, or at a lowly social level, roundness prevailed; but for a large fortified site like Cadbury, with the wealth implied by the imported pottery, a rectangular hall would be correct.

This generalization sadly underestimated the social status of the Buiston house, which has a floor area absolutely comparable with that of accepted British and Anglo-Saxon halls. Size in the abstract, of course, is not a sufficient criterion of status; but within a given social framework it is certainly one indicator. At Buiston there are further pointers to wealth and noble status.[4] For a start, there is the cost of the skilled carpentry required to build a large

[1] Lynn (1978).

[2] Radford (1957). To this can now be added Addyman (1972); Rahtz (1976).

[3] Summary with references in Alcock (1971/3), pp. 212–29.

[4] Munro (1882), pp. 190–239. The comparative floor areas are: Buiston, *c.* 235 m² (Munro (1882), pl. iv); Doon Hill A, 216 m² (Reynolds (1978), fig. 9); Cadbury-Camelot, 182 m²; Yeavering A2, 273 m² (Hope-Taylor (1977), fig. 60).

house of dressed and jointed woodwork. The occurrence of weapons argues for a noble military presence, and wealth is demonstrated by gold and bronze jewellery, imported pottery, and the patronage of metalworkers. All this shows that, in fifth- to eighth-century Britain, a noble household might live as well in a circular as in a rectangular hall.

It follows that, in terms of plan alone, some at least of the Cadbury round houses may belong to Cadbury 11 rather than to the Iron Age. A building erected in the latter phase might have its wall-trench cut through a litter of pottery and other rubbish of Cadbury 7 to 9, and some of this might then be incorporated in the packing of the trench. Only if imported pottery of Cadbury 11, extremely rare on the site, was also included, would the later date be recognized. The implication is that some of the round houses which have hitherto been attributed to the Iron Age may belong instead to Cadbury 11. This possibility is reinforced by recent evidence from Congresbury, where both sub-rectangular post-hole buildings and sub-circular wall-slot structures appear to be contemporary with imported pottery of the late fifth and sixth centuries.[1]

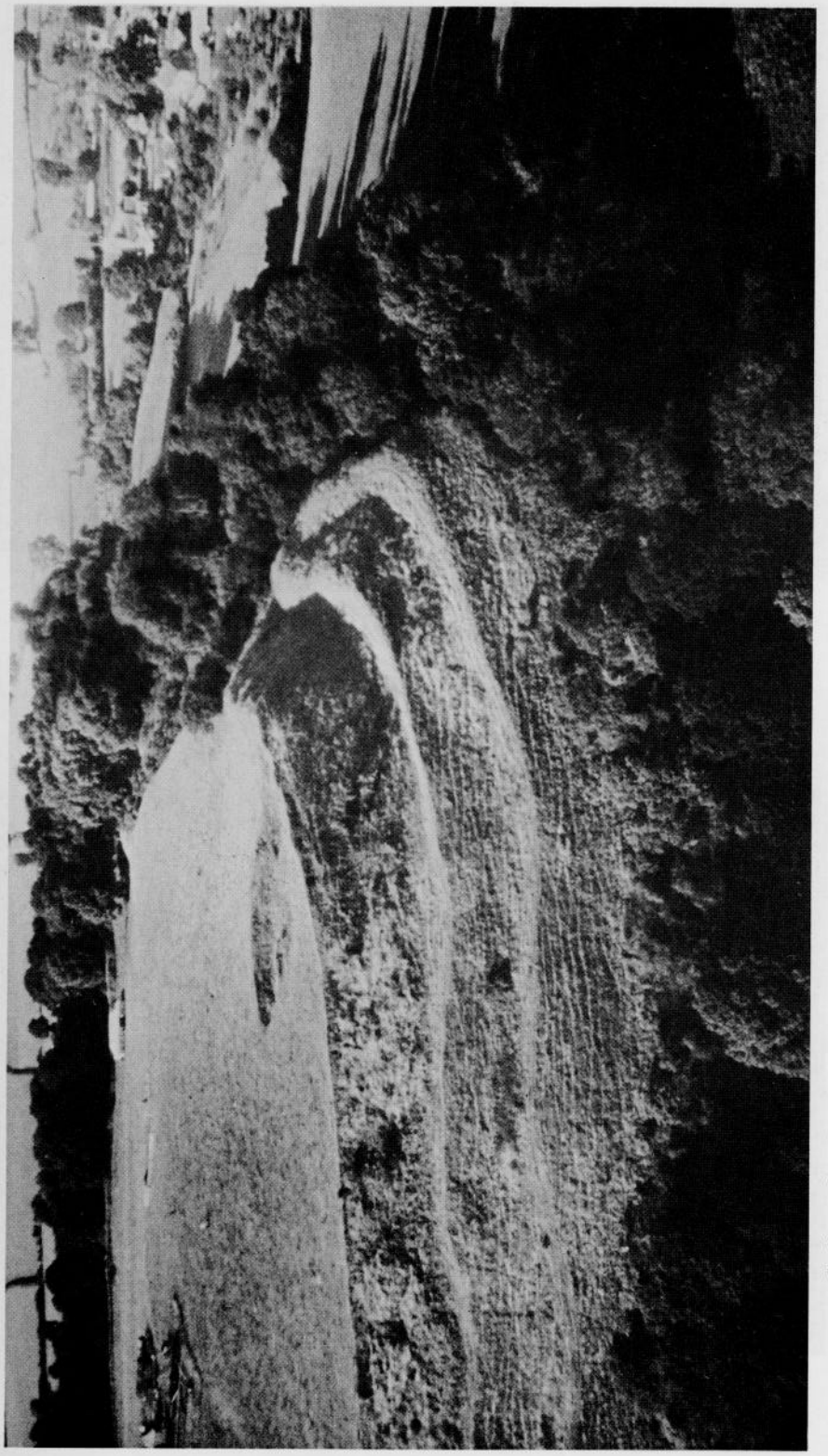
This, of course, is part of my fifteen-year perspective, but in 1967 and 1968 we were scrutinizing the geophysical indications for rectangular buildings assignable to Cadbury phases 11 and 12. I have told elsewhere how we failed to find them, but were led by chance to the discovery of a sixth-century timber hall:[2] an example of the principle, so marked in Wheeler's own career, that serendipity is the prime attribute of the successful excavator. In brief: in 1968 we found a wall-slot with two unweathered sherds of Bi amphorae in its filling. Between then and the 1969 season we speculated on the likely plan of the building to which the wall-slot belonged. We began the 1969 season by testing these speculations, and found them all wanting. We therefore opened up a wide trench at right angles to the northern end of the wall-slot, uncovering an area of about 540 square metres, which contained over two hundred and fifty rock-cut features (Pl. XXIII*b*).

We were then faced with a problem of recognition, assuming, of course, that the wall-slot proved that there was indeed a building to be recognized. At one level, this was an exercise comparable to a child's spot-the-hidden-faces puzzle; but at another, it posed deep philosophical problems of archaeological perception—problems all too often overlooked by archaeological theoreticians. In many cases, of course, it is possible to recognize the plan of a building,

[1] Burrow (1981*b*), fig. 11.

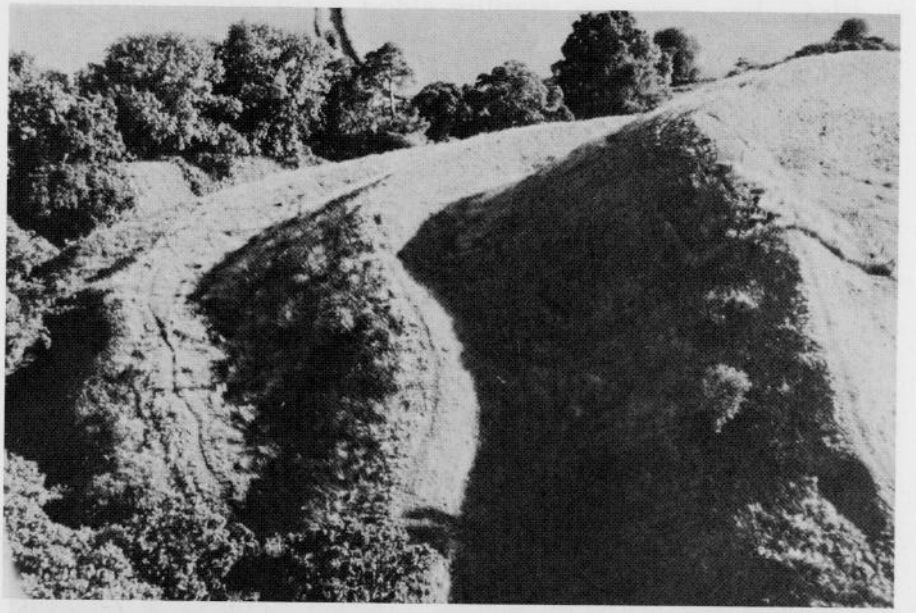
[2] Alcock (1972), pp. 74–5, 79.

PLATE XXI

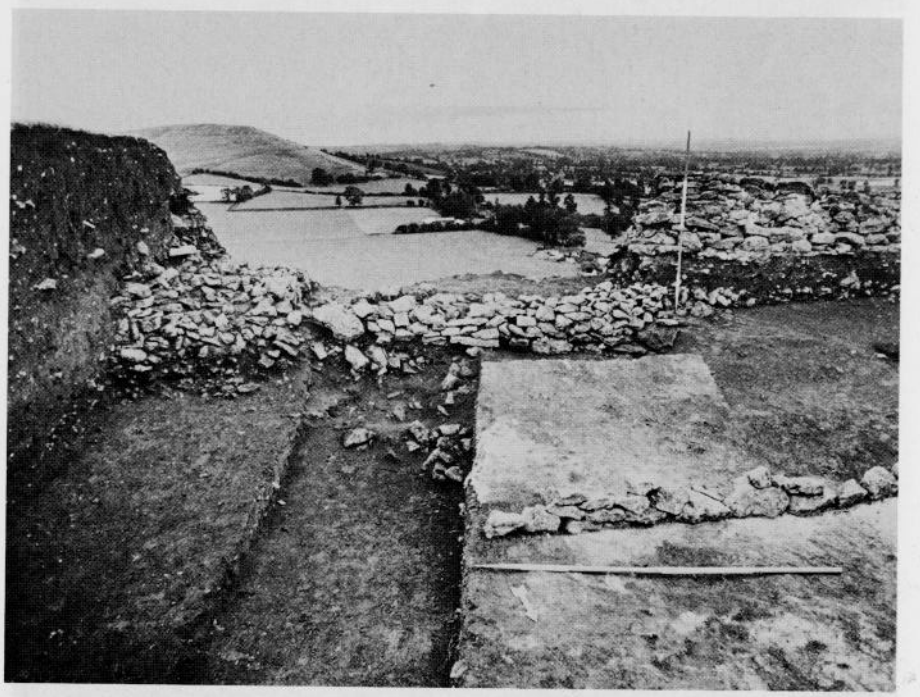


Cadbury-Camelot from the air. The three inner ramparts are clearly visible, but the outermost is concealed by trees

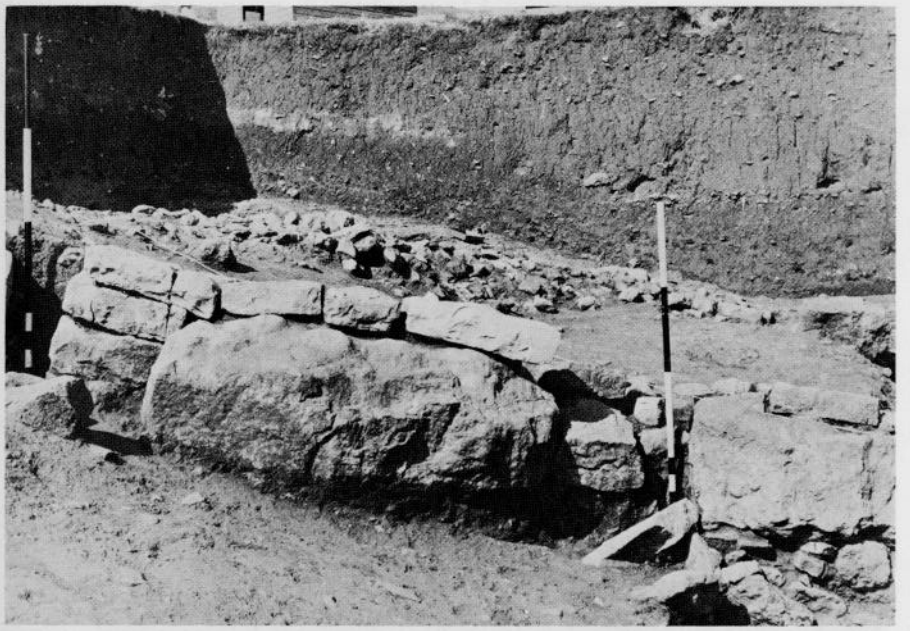
PLATE XXII



a. The south-eastern defences from the air



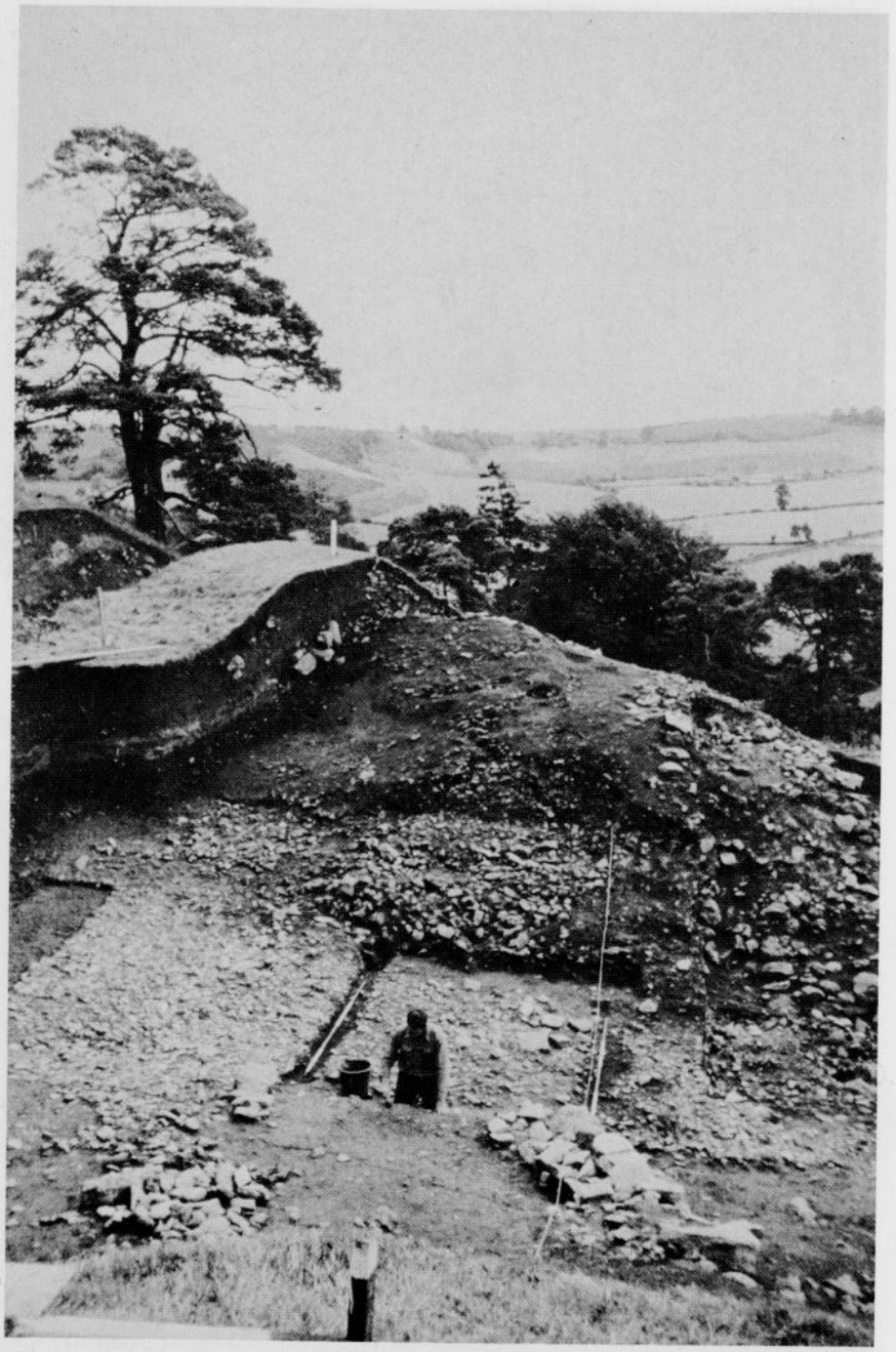
b. Cutting D: the defences of Cadbury 11 and 12 as revealed in 1967. The mortared wall of the Ethelredan *burh* (Cadbury 12) is seen on the right overlying the rear of Rampart E (Cadbury 11).



a. The front face of Rampart E at the south-west gate, showing reused dressed Roman masonry, and vertical timber slots

b. The hall of Cadbury 11. The white markers stand in the most definite post-holes

PLATE XXIV



The south-west gate in period 11. The road surface is that of Cadbury 11B, with front and rear timber slots clearly visible. The walling in the right foreground is that seen in Pl. XXIII*a*

amid a confusion of post-holes, because of the clustering of pit depths and diameters. Elsewhere at Cadbury, for instance, four-post and six-post structures of the Iron Age were indicated in just this way. But in this area, there was no clustering, so the exercise was one of pure pattern recognition. Certain rules can be laid down for this, but they would not provide a program for asking a computer to select a likely pattern. This is an exercise in which the human eye and brain, refined over two million or more years, are still the best available instruments.

Any search for a building plan begins at a two-dimensional level. The essential criteria are overall symmetry and overall unity. In early buildings, as we can see in cases where the structure stood in isolation, there may be no absolute straightness of line or regularity of spacing between posts, or of post depth and diameter. Nevertheless, a reasonable degree of regularity may be expected. An important rule is that, if structural features required for symmetry or regularity are missing, there must be an explanation for their absence. For instance, later features may have obliterated them; or at Cadbury, where most rock-cut features had an undifferentiated black filling, it could sometimes be demonstrated that a later feature had cut an earlier one without leaving any trace of disturbance. Applying these rules a rationally justified building plan may be proposed. It then becomes possible to ask questions in three-dimensional terms: could such a building have been roofed and would it then have stood?

This is essentially an inductive approach from observations on the ground, but one which is guided by principles of unity, symmetry, and regularity. It is no doubt also guided, consciously or not, by an awareness of possible parallels; but the deliberate search for parallels must be the final stage, not the starting-point, of our thinking. Indeed, certain negative rules may be laid down here. In a British context, Anglo-Saxon and Germanic halls and farmsteads must be deliberately excluded. This is particularly true of the developed Yeavering style, which was plainly an exercise in the ostentatious consumption of timber.[1] Again we can dismiss the idea that British buildings would have been crudely wrought in undressed timbers. All that we know of Celtic skills in carpentry argues against this. Finally, even the very earliest standing timberwork is too far removed in time to provide a valid guide as to what might, or might not, have been built around AD 500.

Applying these rules, we can reasonably distinguish the

[1] Hope-Taylor (1977).

following pattern (fig. 2). At right angles to both ends of the wall-slot are straight lines respectively of five and four posts. Beyond these, at either end, the line angles inwards; and then the two parallels are linked by shallow curves. Within this outer line are two further parallel lines, respectively of four and two posts. In all four lines, evidence for other posts may have been lost in non-contemporary features. This pattern has several interesting attributes. At 19 m long by 10 m wide, it approximates to a double square. The separation of the inner and outer parallels is in the ratio 1 : 2 : 1. The wall slot divides the area in the proportions 2 : 1. None of these characteristics was consciously in mind when we recognized or created the pattern, but all of them can be paralleled in known building plans. Finally, there is a very curious parallel at the near contemporary British hall at Doon Hill, of which a plan was first published in 1980.[1] There, as at Cadbury, the end bays of the hall taper slightly. It is difficult to accept that this is the result of an error in the original laying out.

Having thus established the skeleton plan of a building, we must immediately recognize the inadequacies of the evidence, and the consequent limitations on any interpretation. We were able to recover evidence only for those structural features which had penetrated the bedrock to a depth of five centimetres or more. Ploughing and erosion have destroyed floors, whether they had been of puddled and beaten clay, or of planks raised on joists. With them have gone any indications of hearths, which might have guided our interpretation of the compartments within the building. Even more serious for a structural interpretation, we may have lost all trace of shallow-bedded wall-staves, or sill beams to hold wattle or vertical planks for the outer walls, as well as evidence for threshold beams and light internal partitions.

It is with this in mind that, in essaying a reconstruction of this building, I have restored a sill beam, holding either wattle or planks, to give solidity to the outer wall. A major reservation has been expressed about previously published restorations, which must cast doubt on the very existence of the building; namely, that the posts implied by the rock-cut features are too slight, and too shallow-bedded, to support a roof. Certainly they would not have supported the monstrous 10 m tie-beams of my 1972 reconstruction. The smallest of the uprights may have been as little as 25 cm square, but most of them were larger. They were bedded in pits which ranged from 7 to 48 cm in the solid rock. To this may be added perhaps 30 to 50 cm of overburden. This may not have been

[1] Reynolds (1978), fig. 9; Hope-Taylor (1980).

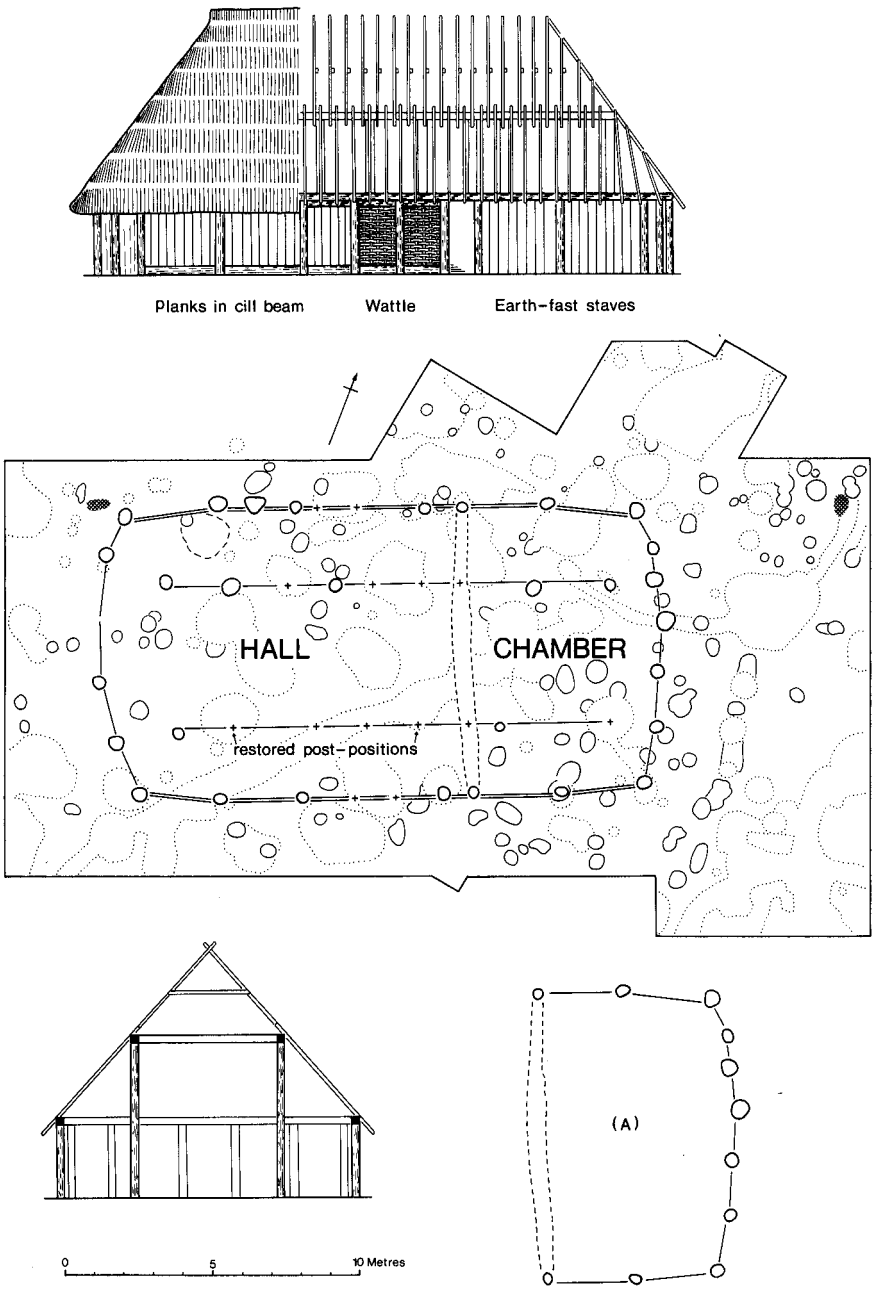


FIG. 2. The feasting-hall of Cadbury 11

sufficient to ensure lateral stability, but there can have been no problem of subsidence. Solid outer walls and a hipped roof would have taken care of lateral shifting. As for the roof itself, Mr F. W. B. Charles has suggested the use of ring beams on both the arcade and the wall posts, supporting a roof structure of uniform scantling A-frames. He believes that such a building could have stood, and so does the Cadbury Deputy Director, Mr C. R. Musson, who is himself a former architect. Even so, I regard the present drawings as essentially a programme for discussion rather than a definitive statement.

We have, then, evidence for a large structure which, from its location, may be labelled Building L/1. Before its function is discussed, its attribution to Cadbury 11 must be established more firmly. The main evidence is the two completely unweathered amphora sherds from the filling of the transverse wall-trench. Given the softness of the fabric, and the abraded condition of most Bi sherds from Cadbury, I do not believe that these fragments had lain exposed until the next building phase in the eleventh century. They must therefore fix the infilling of the wall-slot in Cadbury 11. The overall distribution of imported pottery reinforces the case, for as Table 2 shows, it is sporadic except for two clusters. One of these, at the south-west gate, implies a midden on the back of the rampart; the other, containing 37 per cent of all the imported pottery from Cadbury, lies around, and especially within, Building L/1.

Before we accept this as confirmation both of the existence of the building and of its Cadbury 11 date, a caution is necessary. At least as far back as the Early Bronze Age, there is evidence that dwellings were kept tidy.[1] Concentrations of finds are therefore

TABLE 2: INCIDENCE OF IMPORTED POT SHERDS AT CADBURY

	Area of site								
Class	B	C	D	EFG	K	L	N	P	S
A	1	1	1	1	1	4			
Bi	4	9	1	7	33	24	2	2	5
Bii			1	5	2	18	1	3	
Biv					7				
D					1				
Total	5	10	3	13	44	46	3	5	5

For the location of these areas, see Alcock (1972), fig. 9. The south-western gateway is K; the hall is in area L and the ancillary building in S.

[1] Bradley (1971).

appropriate to middens or to slums, not to noble houses. Paucity of finds associated with architectural magnificence is strikingly illustrated by Yeavering. If this doctrine is applied rigorously to the area of Building L/1, it follows that in Cadbury 11 this was a slum or a midden. But two other points are relevant. Two or three amphorae had already been broken before L/1 and the associated Building S/1 were erected, because both have sherds in their wall-trenches. Secondly, given that amphorae are large vessels, a total of forty-four fragments is not a large number to have escaped the notice of maidservants amid the straw and bracken on a clay floor or fallen through the cracks of a plank one. So the principle itself is not violated, while the finds allow us to recognize a building where wine had been drunk.

Before the implications of this are explored, it is worth considering the problems raised for sampling strategies by the overall distribution of the imported pottery, with its two tight concentrations on Sites K and L. A well-designed sampling programme would no doubt have established that Cadbury was occupied in phase 11; but, unless the sample had been very large, it would probably have failed to locate one of its major features: Building L/1. This is because, on a large and complex site, human activity is not randomly distributed but purposefully concentrated. The areas of concentration can rarely be predicted; instead, they are to be inferred from the empirically established distribution of artefacts and structures. The Anglo-Saxon village of Chalton has clearly demonstrated the incomplete, and even misleading, conclusions which might be drawn from a carefully devised sampling procedure.[1]

Having examined the arguments in favour of Building L/1 as a large structure 19 m long by 10 m wide, we must now consider an alternative plan which is preferred by some students of early medieval timber buildings. This takes the wall-slot and nearer parallel row of posts as the western and eastern long walls of a slightly bowed or boat-shaped building. At 10 m long by 6.5 m wide, this would be only a third of the area of the building already suggested, and would clearly be of significantly lower social status. The unweathered amphora sherds from the wall-slot would still date it to Cadbury 11. My own objections to this plan are threefold: it maximizes the irregularity of line and spacing of the rock-cut features; it does not answer the supposed difficulty that the post-pits are too small and too shallow for a substantial building; and it does not account for the scatter of amphora

[1] Champion (1978).

sherds both sides of the wall-slot, in good conformity with the outline of a 19 m building.

Returning, then, to the plan originally suggested for Building L/1, we see that this was a large structure, costly to build, and set, moreover, in a dominant position on the Cadbury hilltop: the social centre of Cadbury 11. We may legitimately see it as a royal or noble hall: the kind of place in which St Columba visited Brude, king of the Picts,[1] or Mynyddog Mwynfawr feasted the noble warriors of Gododdin.[2] In that feast, indeed, mead and wine were conspicuous. These Celtic examples can, of course, be readily matched in Anglo-Saxon history and literature.

One of the most interesting features of the hall plan is the partition which divides it into units of one-third and two-thirds. This obviously has implications for social ritual and convention. In Anglo-Saxon literature there are references to a *bur*, which may gloss *camera*, as an element in the layout of a royal centre. It may be interpreted as a private apartment, sometimes specifically for a royal lady, or the women of the household; the king and queen may retire thither for the night.[3] I know of no comparable references in early British literature except for the formalized statements of the Welsh Laws. None the less, it seems reasonable to regard the smaller space in Building L/1 as a bower or chamber, and the larger one as the hall proper.

An interesting comparison arises here with the British hall at Doon Hill. This had three transverse divisions, but these must represent two sub-periods. In one of these, the hall is divided in 2:1 proportions in the Cadbury manner. In the other, there is a small chamber at either end, each demarcating about one-sixth of the interior. Since this arrangement also occurs at Yeavering, it may be called the Yeavering type. There the arrangement of the doors suggests that the end compartments are antechambers rather than bowers. It was the Cadbury type which held promise for the future, since hall-and-chamber layouts, sometimes in 2:1 proportions, occur in medieval stone castles.

Only one other group of early British buildings can be compared with Building L/1: the two halls excavated by Dr Radford within the lightly redefended fort of Castle Dore. Professor Rahtz's analysis has stressed that only about half of the total area of these buildings was uncovered, and their plans are uncertain in detail. The irregularity in spacing and line of the observed post-holes is an impediment to our understanding of the Castle

[1] Anderson and Anderson (1961), p. 402.
[2] Jackson (1969), pp. 33–7.
[3] Cramp (1957), pp. 71–2.

Dore buildings.[1] This in turn emphasizes the special position of Cadbury, with the only completely excavated plan of a southern British hall, as Doon Hill is our only complete northern example.

What can be said of the ancestry of the Cadbury 11 hall? Clearly this must be sought not in Germanic sources, but in fourth-century Roman Britain. Despite a general tendency to rebuild in stone, the timber buildings of the third and fourth centuries present a confusing array of building plans and constructional techniques, including the use of separate post-pits, continuous wall-trenches, and even cruck construction. The best antecedents for Cadbury L/1 are to be found among the aisled houses of villa complexes. These commonly have the aisle and nave in a 1:2:1 relationship, within an overall double square plan, just as at Cadbury.[2] An apposite example is that at Wakerley, which is about the same length as Building L/1 and slightly wider. Despite the size of the post-pits, the arcade posts were only 20 to 35 cm in diameter. The evidence for the outer wall consisted of a number of post holes linked by a continuous wall-slot which was only 15 cm deep. A trench of these dimensions would certainly have been obliterated by ploughing at Cadbury.

Despite such comparisons, there are difficulties in the way of tracing the ancestry of the Cadbury hall to the Romano-British aisled house. Firstly, both internal details, and their position within villa complexes, show that these frequently had a lowly status, as accommodation for slaves and farm labourers, or places for corn-drying and general storage. But some of them also had hypocausts and mosaics, so their lowly rank should not be overstressed. The second difficulty is more decisive, because it is chronological. Most of the aisled houses which had been raised on earthfast posts in the second and early third centuries were replaced by stone buildings, or at least by stone sleeper-walls, in the third and fourth centuries.[3] The chronological gap which this presents is not unlike that which we encounter when seeking the ancestry of the Cadbury 11 gate.

V

Only one other excavated structure can be shown to belong to Cadbury 11 on the evidence of an amphora sherd incorporated in one of its wall-trenches. This, Building S/1, is a rectangular structure, 4 m × 2 m, which lies about 4 m from the northern door of the hall. It may have been a kitchen, but the plough destruction

[1] Radford (1951); Rahtz (1971).
[2] Smith (1963).
[3] Jackson and Ambrose (1978).

of its floor and any associated hearth makes it impossible to determine this. The point has also been made that some of the Cadbury round houses may also belong to phase 11. This is a limited architectural yield from the excavation of a substantial fortress, which may have been a royal or noble centre; but it is consistent with the meagre harvest of contemporary finds. A partial explanation is that only about 6 per cent of the interior of Cadbury was excavated; and further, through the hazards of discovery, no major midden deposit or industrial complex was located.

It is worth asking what else might have been found, given our knowledge of the period and of contemporary sites. A British kingdom would have been Christian, so there must have been a church, possibly of wood like that at West Hill, Uley.[1] Weapons, well known from poems such as the *Gododdin*, are rare on British sites. None were found at Dinas Powys, but Buiston yielded a fine spearhead, as well as iron bolt-heads and the trigger-nut from a crossbow. The major activity missing from Cadbury 11 is undoubtedly metalworking, including iron-smelting and smithing, and the making of jewellery in gold, silver, and bronze with enamel and millefiore inlays. Evidence for such activities is strong at Dinas Powys; jewellery moulds were very common at Mote of Mark; and Buiston, Congresbury, and Dinas Emrys have all yielded traces of metalworking. The activities of both jeweller and blacksmith are, however, both mysterious and physically noxious, so it is likely that they would be kept well away from the hall, as they certainly were at Dinas Powys. This is one more warning of the biased character of the evidence recovered from the partial excavation of a large settlement, in which particular activities would have been markedly segregated.

A further curiosity of the repertoire of artefacts from Cadbury 11 is that two Anglo-Saxon trinkets were found, but none of British workmanship. The first was a gilt bronze button brooch, decorated with a helmeted head, which belongs to a group of over a hundred such brooches, found characteristically in pagan Saxon women's graves. A closely similar brooch comes from Mucking, but Professor Evison and Mr Avent believe that the Cadbury example was made in southern central England in the later fifth or early sixth century. This is consistent with Cadbury 11A.

The second Saxon jewel is a silver ring, crudely altered to make

[1] Ellison (1980). There are possible traces of a wooden church, largely destroyed by ploughing, within the Late Saxon church at Cadbury: Alcock (1972), fig. 8B.

a brooch or buckle, which was found beneath the phase 11B road through the south-west gate. The actual form has no known parallels, but the decoration consists of zoomorphic motifs, especially hind limbs, in Salin's Style I. Allowing for its reuse and subsequent loss, a date in the late sixth century is appropriate for its deposition in Cadbury 11B.

How did these two Saxon trinkets come to be lost in a British fort? At Dinas Powys, there were many fragments of gilded, silvered, or plain bronze from Anglo-Saxon objects, including brooches and bucket bindings. These were interpreted as scrap metal, imported from Anglo-Saxon or Germanic sources along with scrap glass or cullet, to be melted down for reuse in the making of British-style pins and brooches. If a jeweller's workshop had been discovered at Cadbury it would have been easier to assess such an explanation for one or both of the Saxon pieces. Another possibility is that they came on the dresses of Saxon women, captured in war or coming to a British royal centre as brides, a counterpart of the British brides who may have given Celtic names to some of the sons of the Wessex dynasty.

VI

Our archaeological survey has disclosed, in Cadbury 11, a very substantial fortification, built originally a decade or two either side of AD 500, and repaired in the late sixth century. Within it was a major building, interpreted as a feasting hall and bower. What were the political and military contexts, the social status and the economic function of these structures? In 1972 I suggested that the role of the refortified Cadbury was a military one, in a Dumnonian kingdom that was under attack from an expanding Wessex. Its large size, pre-eminent among known forts of the period, fitted it to serve as the base for an army larger than the normal war-band of a British dynasty. A historical context for an augmented army, drawn from several kingdoms, was suggested by the *Historia Brittonum* statement that 'Arthur fought together with the kings of the Britons, but he was the leader of battles'.[1] The founding of Cadbury 11A could be related to the campaigns of Ambrosius and his unnamed successors, culminating in the British victory at Mount Badon. The repairs of phase 11B were then a response to the late sixth-century campaigns which resulted in the Wessex victory at Dyrham in AD 577.

This politico-military interpretation of Cadbury 11 was

[1] Morris (1980), p. 76.

endorsed by several reviewers, but I now regard it as quite inadequate. It is true that we do know of armies gathered together from several kingdoms: examples include Penda's army at Winwaed, or the Gododdin expedition to Catraeth. It is also probable that the phase 11B repairs were indeed inspired by renewed Anglo-Saxon expansion. But the relationship between Cadbury 11A and the Badon campaign is less clear-cut. Firstly, the date of the battle itself cannot be fixed more closely than the bracket 491 × 506, or even 491 × 516.[1] Secondly, the beginning of Cadbury 11A cannot be dated precisely. Some of the imported pottery was manufactured 460–70, but its deposition on the site is not necessarily so early. A bracket from 470 to 530 is as close as we can get for the building of the defences and the hall. So Cadbury 11A may be a work of Ambrosius Aurelianus or his immediate successor, at the time of swaying fortunes between Britons and Saxons; it may indeed have played a part in the Badon campaign; or it may belong to the years of civil strife in Gildas's own lifetime. Neither the historical nor the archaeological chronology is sufficiently precise to decide between these options.

A further objection to the interpretation of Cadbury 11A as the military base for a specific campaign, with its implications of temporary or occasional use, follows from our new understanding of the rampart structure. Now that we appreciate the effort involved in the work of refortification, and especially in the hewing, carting, and building of the timber framework, this all seems more appropriate for a permanent establishment than for a campaign base. What might such an establishment have been? How might it have fitted into British political and social organization? To examine such questions from an archaeological point of view, we must look at other fortifications of the period, and at unfortified political centres as well. Our enquiry must range beyond Dumnonia into the northern British kingdoms and even Northumbria.

Here I follow the views of a long line of historians that the political and social organization of medieval Northumbria encapsulated that of the British kingdoms which the Anglian dynasties had taken over. Consequently there is much to be learned about early British society from Northumbria, as well as from Wales and Dumnonia. This is not to say that British society was a monolithic body, regardless of place and time; but simply that, in the perspective in which we see it, it is easier to discern the broad

[1] Miller (1976).

outlines—like the bulk of a mountain seen distantly through shifting mists—than to detect the details varying from part to part.

We must first establish which Dumnonian forts were defended or at least occupied at the period of Cadbury 11. Somerset is the most intensively studied area. Here Dr Burrow has published a gazetteer of eighty-nine hillforts and defended enclosures.[1] In twenty-seven cases there are references, of varied detail and reliability, to the discovery of Romano-British material, especially pottery and coins. Two forts only, Cadbury-Camelot and Cadbury-Congresbury, have also yielded imported pottery of the late fifth and sixth centuries, though Ham Hill may add a doubtful third. Despite intensive study of the area, this number has not increased since 1959. The conclusion is that, in Somerset, it is unusual for a pre-Roman hillfort to be reoccupied or refortified around AD 500, even if it had been used in the Roman centuries. Elsewhere in Dumnonia, imported pottery may have occurred at the Roman town of Lindinis/Ilchester; and is certainly known from seven Iron Age or Romano-British forts or enclosures where the defences may or may not have been refurbished, namely Castle Dore, Chun, Grambla, High Peak, Killibury, Trethurgy, and Trevelgue; and in abundance from Tintagel, which has recently been reinterpreted as a secular stronghold rather than a monastery.[2]

The habitable area at Tintagel approaches that of Cadbury, but the work involved in building its defensive bank and ditch is far less. Cadbury-Congresbury has about half the area of Cadbury-Camelot, but its defences, apart from the remarkable bastion-like entrance arrangements, are comparatively feeble. Both these sites are none the less exceptional in the size of the enclosed area, and they will require some special explanation in the fullness of time, perhaps as royal centres. Chun, Castle Dore, Killibury, and Trethurgy are more normal in terms of size; they compare well with small forts such as Dinas Emrys, Dinas Powys, and Castell Degannwy in Wales; Mote of Mark among the northern Britons; Dunadd and Dunollie among the Scots of Argyll; and Dundurn among the Picts. In the past these have been regarded as the defended homesteads of Celtic warlords or warrior chiefs, or at best British princes, though Dunadd, which was certainly a royal inauguration site, has commonly been called the capital of Dalriada. Are these the appropriate terms to use?[3]

Another fort of the northern Britons was Dunbar. The first

[1] Burrow (1981*b*). [2] Thomas (1981) and references.
[3] For the northern British sites, Alcock (1981).

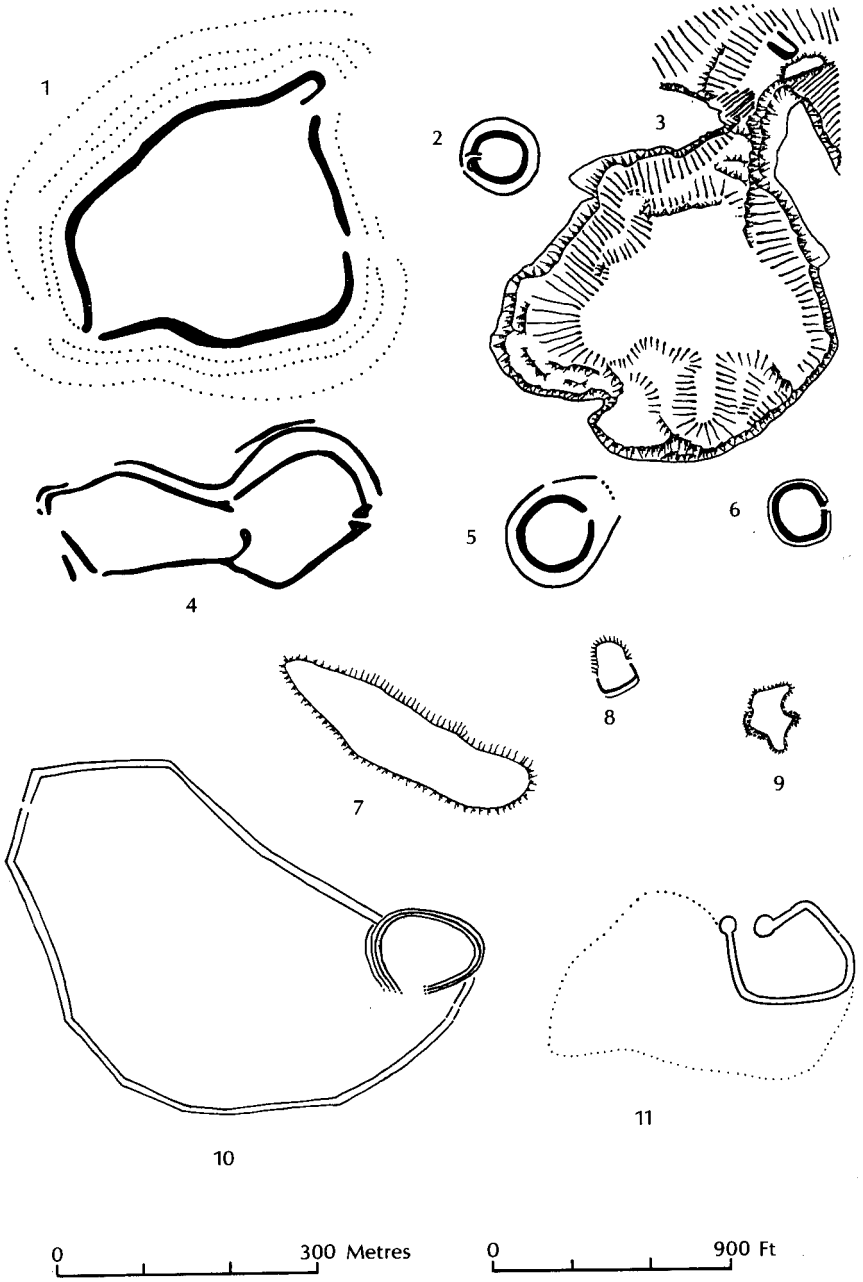


FIG. 3. Comparative plans of forts and other royal centres in Dumnonia, Wales, and Northumbria. 1, Cadbury-Camelot; 2, Chun; 3, Tintagel; 4, Congresbury; 5, Castle Dore; 6, Trethurgy; 7, Bamburgh; 8, Dinas Powys; 9, Dunbar; 10, Milfield; 11, Yeavering

recorded form of the name, Dynbaer, from Primitive Cumbric **din barr*, ridge (or summit) fort, shows that it was a British foundation. To judge from the coastal stack on which it was built, it was about the size of Dinas Powys or Chun. It first appeared in history as an Anglian royal town or stronghold, where King Ecgfrith of Northumbria had Bishop Wilfrid imprisoned in *urbem suam Dynbaer*. It may have been one of the *civitates et castella* which Ecgfrith and his queen visited, on another occasion, with pomp and feasting.[1] At the time of Wilfrid's imprisonment it was in the charge of a *praefectus*, an earl or thane. He may have had responsibility for a wide tract of north-eastern Northumbria: the kind of area centred on an *urbs*, in which historians have seen the administrative forerunner of the shires and thanages of medieval Northumbria.[2] This is an altogether more advanced concept than that of the defended homestead of a Celtic warrior-chief.

It follows that a literate seventh-century Englishman would have called one of the smaller British forts *urbs*. *Arx* and *munitio* would be other possible terms. A literate Briton would have used similar words, whereas in his own tongue he would have said *din* or *caer*. *Urbs* would be appropriate for Cadbury as well, but might it also have ranked as a *civitas*? Bede normally uses *civitas* of places which he does not otherwise call *urbs* and which were distinguished by a significant Roman past.[3] But this generalization has two interesting exceptions in northern Britain. Bebbanburh/Bamburgh, originally the British fort of Din Guoaroy, is described as *regia civitas* or as *urbs regia*. It had indeed been occupied throughout the Roman centuries, but presumably as a native promontory fort. The only Roman, as opposed to native, aspect is a hint of a late Roman signal beacon. Alt Clut, identified with Castle Rock Dumbarton, was twice called *urbs* by Bede, but it was also *civitas Brettonum munitissima*. Excavation has yielded no evidence for a Roman presence, and in this case *civitas* presumably indicates a major political centre.

The craggy nature of Alt Clut makes it impossible to calculate the usable area, but the curtain of the medieval castle encloses about half the area of Cadbury. Bamburgh is even smaller. These comparisons suggest that, in terms of size, Cadbury might qualify as a *civitas*. An immediate difficulty arises over its relationship with the known Roman *civitas Durotrigum Lindinensis*, modern Ilchester, some seven miles to the west. Little is known in detail about the

[1] Colgrave (1927), chs. 38–9.
[2] Hunter Blair (1954), pp. 169–70; Barrow (1973), pp. 66–7.
[3] Campbell (1979), pp. 34–42.

history of Lindinis in the late Roman period, but a few sherds of Class B amphorae are reputed to come from the town. If, as this suggests, Lindinis was still occupied around AD 500, then why was it necessary to refortify Cadbury? A clue may be found in the unsettled second decade of the eleventh century, when Ethelred II transferred moneyers from the mint at Ilchester to the newly built hill-top *burh* of Caddanburh. Had Cadbury 11 likewise replaced Lindinis in the troubled decades of the late fifth or early sixth century?

One other unit of early medieval government should be considered in an attempt to understand Cadbury 11: the *villa regia*, *villa regalis*, or *vicus regis*, which figure prominently in Bede's Northumbria.[1] Bede never applies these terms to places which he calls *urbs* or *civitas*, though it is difficult to believe that Alt Clut, Bamburgh, or Dunbar did not fulfil the role of administrative centre appropriate to a *villa regalis*. Thanks to air photography, fieldwork, and excavation we now have plans of two of Bede's *villae regales*: Adgefrin/Yeavering and Maelmin/Milfield.[2] To these we may reasonably add Sprouston, on the evidence of rectangular halls with end-annexes in the Yeavering manner.[3] At both Milfield and Sprouston there are traces of perimeter palisades which enclose areas absolutely comparable with the built-up zone at Yeavering and with the interior of Cadbury 11. This correspondence in size suggests at least a convergence of function between Cadbury 11 and the Northumbrian royal vills.

It is commonly agreed that the royal vills were centres for the organized administration and systematic exploitation of the surrounding area. This was no doubt equally true of the royal *urbs* or *civitas*, or the *civitates et castella* among which Ecgfrith made his progress with pomp and, very significantly, with feasting. In other terms, they were the centres of multiple or discrete estates, and this is how we should interpret Cadbury 11.[4] If we do, then its geographical location gains in significance. Not only was it set on a steep-sided hill, immensely strong by nature. Its position, near the scarp of the Jurassic uplands and overlooking the main Somerset basin, fitted it to exploit a variety of environments.

If this interpretation of Cadbury 11 proves acceptable, then it implies that my original explanation in politico-military terms is inadequate. This must be equally true of the other Dumnonian forts, and those of Wales and northern Britain, that were also

[1] Campbell (1979), pp. 43–6.
[2] Hope-Taylor (1977).
[3] Reynolds (1978).
[4] Barrow (1973); Jones (1976).

occupied in the sixth century AD. This is not to say, however, that a military role has no place in our understanding of such forts. The fuller historical evidence from northern Britain reveals that among the Picts, the Scots, the Angles, and the Britons, places like Alt Clut, Bamburgh, Dunadd, Dunbar, Dundurn, or Dunollie were frequently besieged, burned, or otherwise destroyed. Some of these events may have been mere incidents in a personal feud, others mark the kind of civil strife which Gildas records, while some settled the fate of nations, or at least of dynasties. The possibility remains that a war-band set out from Cadbury to take part in the battle of Badon; and the probability is high that a well-defended royal centre, close to the Fosse Way, was involved in the Saxons' advance after their victory at Dyrham.

A final caution is necessary here. It is possible to see the fortified places of the sixth and seventh centuries as the centres of the shires and thanages, the multiple or discrete estates, which later emerged into documented history. But this interpretation cannot be extended to those hillforts in Somerset or in Wales and the Marches where there is no evidence for post-Roman use, however elastic we make the term post-Roman. At such places we must infer total abandonment by AD 500. Indeed, an important aspect of the variety, in detail, of early British society is the quite varied histories of individual hillforts in different parts of Britain, from the pre-Roman Iron Age, through the Roman period, and into the post-Roman centuries. These individual histories can only be established empirically by the excavation of individual sites, not by the extension of ill-founded generalizations to the unexcavated examples.[1]

VII

In the last section I indulged in exploratory forays on the troubled frontier between history and archaeology: a frontier which I, for one, do not propose to treat as no-man's-land. It is for historians to judge the validity of my interpretation of the archaeological monuments in terms of the political, administrative and economic units with which they deal, whether *urbs*, *civitas*, *villa regis* or some other. In particular, the archaeologist is entitled to ask the historian how the great communal effort demonstrated by the building of Cadbury II can be interpreted in terms of the history of

[1] I have deliberately confined this discussion to Britain. For the continental reuse of hillforts in this period, a starting point is Uslar (1964), under *Fliehburg*, *Fluchtburg*.

the decades around AD 500. Who could have organized this massive public work, how was it paid for, why was it built?

For archaeological colleagues, the main problem posed by Cadbury II is the validity of its claim to pre-eminence among contemporary fortifications. This claim is based not so much on the size of the area enclosed—for here Tintagel is comparable—but rather on the great effort involved in the construction of the timber-framed rampart. The special position of Cadbury can only be challenged on the basis of evidence from numerous other hillfort excavations; and these excavations must be at a more intensive level than that of an occasional 10 ft square. I shall no doubt be told that the funds for such a campaign of excavation do not exist, especially because no 'rescue' element would be involved.

I accept that it would not be easy to gather the resources, but I do not accept that it would be impossible. Despite the large shift to State-funded rescue archaeology since 1970, a director who is willing to make the effort can still raise adequate funds from learned institutions and private sources. My own experience is that it is possible to carry out informative research excavations on a hillfort for a third of the cost of a comparable State-financed excavation. Moreover, a well-conceived research programme can still inspire the devoted labours of skilled amateurs. One such programme would be the selective sampling of hillforts which had already yielded evidence of late Roman activity. Here, the sense of intellectual adventure, which is so essential an element of research, would be inspired by one of the great themes of British archaeology: how, and by what stages, did Celtic Britain become England, Wales, and Scotland? This is certainly a research strategy that Mortimer Wheeler himself would have commended.

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