

A BEAKER BURIAL FROM MANSTON, NEAR RAMSGATE

D.R.J. PERKINS and A.M. GIBSON

SUMMARY

The archaeological evaluation of a downland site at Manston, Ramsgate, revealed a ploughed-off barrow. Within a ditch of ovate plan was situated a grave containing a crouched burial furnished with a long-necked beaker, a jet button, and a flint knife of plano-convex form. A second crouched burial, and pits, apparently of Iron Age date, were also discovered. A radiocarbon date has been obtained from the skeletal remains accompanying the beaker burial.

INTRODUCTION

A short dry spell in the last week of April 1987 produced a spectacular display of crop-marks in the Isle of Thanet. Special conditions caused buried sites and features to show as dark green against almost yellow fields in a most unusual manner.¹ As a result, shallow features normally producing faint and ephemeral marks become visible. One such set of marks appeared on a downland crest near the landing lights marking the runway approach of Manston Aerodrome. The site is situated on the east-facing slope of the down at TR 351652 and at 143.6 ft. above O.D. A plan of the site is given as Fig. 1, (a). The landowner, Mr David Steed, became concerned at this, since it was then being proposed that a new road be built across the field. Also, topsoil depth in the area is only c. 30 cm., and a sub-soiler had been used to improve cropping. Mr Steed asked the

¹ Cereal crops throughout Thanet came 'under stress' because broadcast nitrogen fertilizer was not absorbed during a short dry spell in what was otherwise a fairly wet spring.

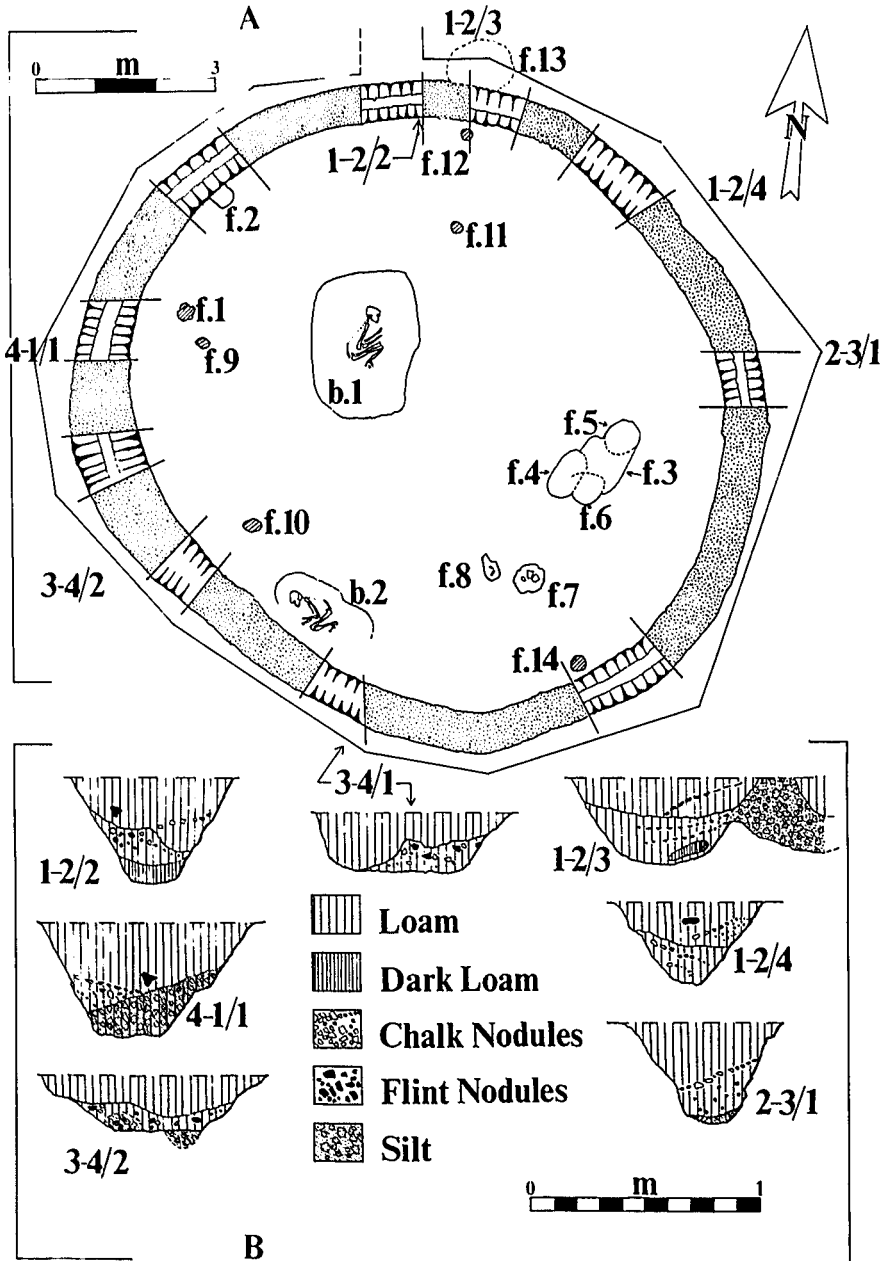


Fig. 1. (a) Plan of the barrow; (b) Ditch sections.

A BEAKER BURIAL FROM MANSTON

writer to investigate some of the markings and to assess the degree of plough attrition. Some of the marks were found to be caused by solution hollows; two, however, proved to be ploughed-off round barrows, one of which is the subject of this report.² An extensive group of round barrows and small henges is situated on a ridge about 500 m. away to the east.³

EXCAVATION

This had to be carried out in two phases, the burial being investigated first in the standing crop, with a return to the site after the harvest.

The Central Burial

Excavation of this feature revealed a crouched burial accompanied by a long-necked beaker, a jet button, and a flint knife. The grave consisted of a flat-bottomed pit of oval plan. This was 2.50 m. long, 1.70 m. wide, and 0.42 m. in depth from the natural chalk surface. The long axis of the grave was orientated roughly 5.5° west of true north. The true sides of the grave were cut at about 20° to the vertical, see 'C' in Fig. 2. This was not immediately apparent, however, as down each of the long sides of the grave was a hard layer of chalk rubble and silt. These areas of 'packing' began level with the chalk surfaces, and sloped inwardly without meeting, thus leaving a cavity of truncated V-section, which was filled with loam, see 'A' in Fig. 2. Some of the chalk packing had been removed at the southern end of the pit, and along part of the eastern side, where it had been cut level to a depth of about 10 cm. below the surrounding chalk surface, see Fig. 2, 'B'. Several iron fragments were found in the loam fill of this area.

The bulk of the human skeletal material represented a crouched burial, with the skull fragments and femora resting on the rise of the chalk packing. That the burial may have been disturbed was shown by the lack of both mandibles and teeth, or of even the most fragmentary traces of vertebrae or pelvis. Only the cranium, long bones of both legs, and of one forearm were present. All the bones were badly eroded and fragile, the long bones lacking most of their

² The other barrow mentioned proved to be plough-damaged, with only the ditch surviving; see Thanet Sites and Monuments Record No. 207.

³ Pending as: D.R.J. Perkins and N. Macpherson-Grant, '*A Barrow Group at Lord-of-the-Manor, Ramsgate*'.

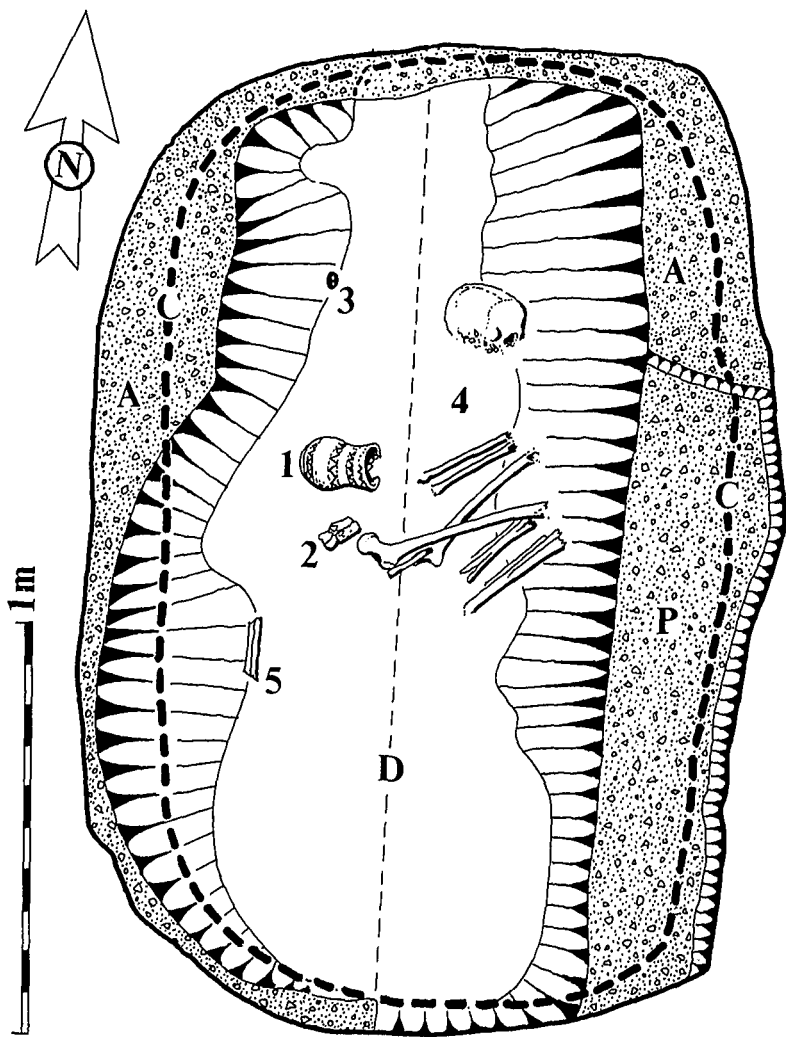


Fig. 2. The Beaker burial.

extremities. Little can be said of the individual thus represented other than that the remains are those of a slightly built late-adolescent or adult. The orientation (spine to skull axis), of the burial appeared to have been just east of north.

A radiocarbon dating experiment has been carried out on collagen from the right femur of the burial, through the offices of Dr A. Gibson and Dr I. Kinnes as part of the British Museum's dating programme for British beakers. The result quoted being:

BM-2642, 3630 ± 50 years BP = 1680 ± 50 bc (2132–1922 years BC) [at 1σ].

The beaker was on its side on the chalk floor of the grave, with a large sherd from the neck and rim lying about 10 cm. away (probably as a result of the grave fill settling). A jet button was found resting on the chalk packing near the floor of the grave, see Fig. 2, 3, and a plano-convex flint knife was found in grave fill just above the skull. The beaker, knife, and button are described and considered later in this paper. Fragments of a femur (not belonging to the latter individual), were found in the fill at a depth of 20 cm., see Fig. 2, 5. This evidence and the several possibilities in relation to the disturbance of the burial are dealt with in discussion.

The Secondary Burial

This occupied a grave of oval plan about 1.40 m. long by 0.80 m. wide, see Fig. 1. Its depth where cut into chalk was only c. 2 cm., as a consequence the skeletal material had suffered plough attrition, being fragmented and flattened. What remained was still discernible as the crouched burial of a person of adult stature, the body lying on its right side. The teeth were of robust dimensions. Dental attrition indicated a person of 22–25 years. Three sherds were found in the grave area, at the intersection of the modern topsoil with the plough-abraded chalk surface. They are in a flint-tempered fabric, and appear to bear traces of chevron decoration, see Fig. 3, 4, and Appendix I. Their association with the burial seems possible, but could not be definitely established.

Internal features

Post-holes:

Six well cut post-holes were found, see Fig. 1, features 1, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, their depths ranging between 8 and 15 cm.

Pits:

Within the ditch were seven pits, four forming a superimposed group

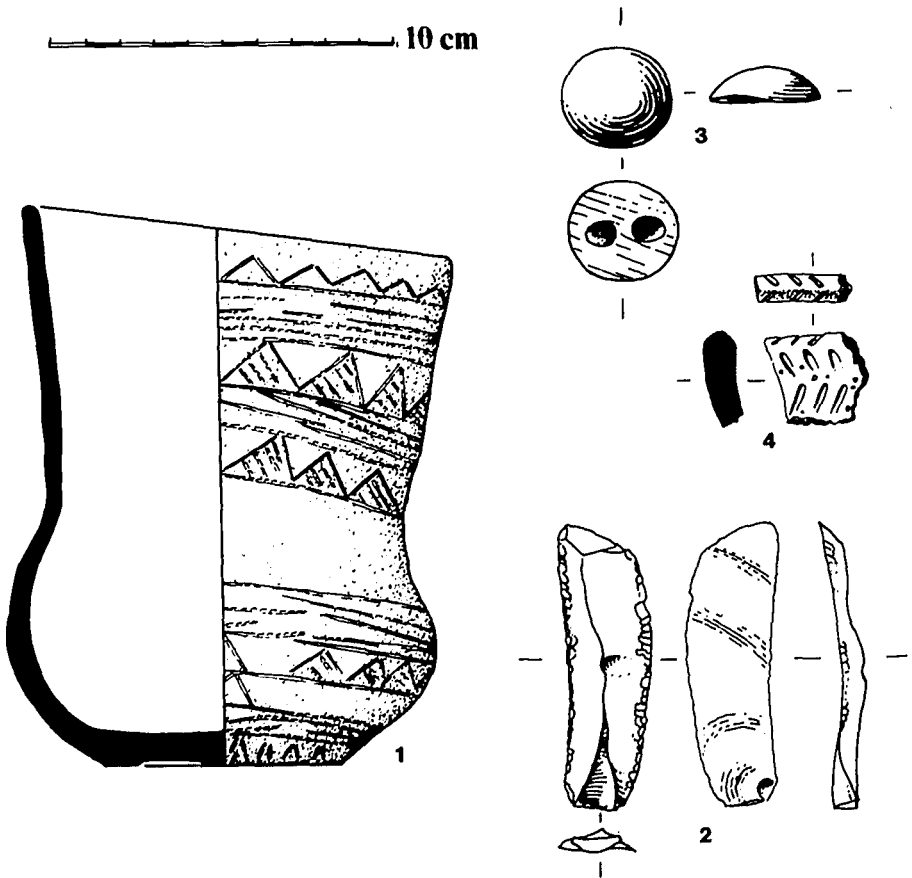


Fig. 3. From Burial 1: The beaker (1), flint knife (2), jet button (3). From Burial 2: Flint-tempered sherd (4).

and cutting each other in the order that they are numbered, (Features 3, 4, 5, and 6), and three being isolated, (Features 2, 7, and 8). All were bowl-shaped and shallow, (less than 20 cm. in depth), with fills of brown loam. Apart from features 3 and 5, all contained pot-sherds in Late Bronze–Early Iron Age fabrics.⁴ The sherds were lying flat on the bottoms of the pits, and each had a flint nodule resting upon it, conveying strongly the impression that this was deliberate deposition.

⁴ For similar material: F.H. Worsfold, *PPS*, ix (1943), 28–47; N.J. Erskine Riall, *Highstead, Chislet, An Interim Report*, Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 1977.

A BEAKER BURIAL FROM MANSTON

An infilled pit (Feature 13), was external to the ditch and had been cut by it, see Fig. 1, Section 1–2/3. Much of its fill consisted of hard chalk silt containing a few marine shells and flint flakes.

The Ditch

This was roughly oval in plan, with several distinct changes of angle suggesting that it had been set out and excavated in perhaps six distinct segments. In support of the latter hypothesis it can be seen that ditch depth and sectional profile varied considerably (see Fig. 1, b), with each segment having an individual section. This was most marked in the south-western segment, see Sections 3–4/1 and 3–4/2. The in-fill sequence, as demonstrated by section, appeared similar on all sides, however. Typically, in-filling had commenced with an influx of either dark organic loam, or a dark silt rich in chalk nodules. Next was a layer of light brown loam with chalk and flints; this appeared to have originated outside the ring ditch, perhaps through the erosion of an outer bank. Above this until truncated by the modern plough-line was a featureless layer of light brown loam, presumably a slow natural fill. The sections were sampled for molluscan analysis and the evidence so obtained is given and discussed as an appendix.

DISCUSSION

The Manston beaker brings the number of such vessels discovered in Thanet to four. A burial accompanied by a beaker conforming to Clarke's Wessex/Middle Rhine group⁵ was found at Cliffs End, Ramsgate in 1967.⁶ During excavations in the Jutish burial ground at St. Peter's, Broadstairs, in 1969–71, a disturbed prehistoric burial was discovered containing: 'a reddish buff beaker common in eastern England, along with a mud-stone rectangular bracer'.⁷ In April 1990, while the writer was carrying out rescue/evaluation excavations at Cottington Hill, Ebbsfleet, Ramsgate, a crouched burial was found accompanied by a beaker belonging to Clarke's East Anglian group.

The three beakers listed above are unpublished and Clarke records only thirty beakers of all groups as being found in Kent. That two

⁵ D.L. Clarke, *Beaker Pottery of Great Britain and Ireland*, Cambridge 1970.

⁶ The beaker is kept at Ramsgate Public Library, and such records of the discovery as exist are with the County Museum Service.

⁷ (Eds.) K.S. Minter and E.F. Herbert, *Archaeological Discoveries at Broadstairs and St. Peter's*, 1973, 9–10.

examples have come to light in Thanet within four years (coinciding with a wave of large-scale developments and road schemes), must mean that beaker distribution maps should be viewed with caution. Most of Kent's round barrows were ploughed level centuries ago, and have not readily come to the notice of the County's archaeologists. Has this resulted in a bias against beaker discovery?

The oval and segmented plan of the barrow ditch is unusual for Thanet without being unique. About 150 ring-ditched enclosures are known in the Isle, of which only 16 have been excavated.⁸ From these, two classes emerge; (a) ploughed-off barrows of about 10 m. diameter; (b) henge-type monuments 20 m. or more in diameter.⁹ Most of these enclosures are circular, the exceptions being: Lord of the Manor Site 2D, and Lord of the Manor Site 4.¹⁰ Both appear to have been excavated as a series of slightly curving segments. Site 2D is a henge-type monument, its period of use probably spanning the date of the Manston beaker. While Site 4 is a round barrow, its near-central burial pit contained an 'incense' or 'accessory' cup, a vessel associated with the Wessex Culture,¹¹ so that it can be considered as more or less contemporary with the beaker. It will be interesting to see in what numbers and contexts the oval-plan enclosure appears in future.

Disturbance to the Central Burial

The skeletal material in the central burial pit was incomplete in a manner that indicates disturbance by a human agency. One would expect the vertebrae and rib-cage to be friable in a prehistoric crouched burial, and so liable to damage by worm action. No trace of these bones was observed though, and more significantly, the pelvis, mandible, and teeth were absent. What remained had every appearance of being *in situ*, however, so that the missing bones, and the position of the button and knife, combine in suggesting post-burial disturbance to the upper part of the burial, leaving the leg bones and beaker intact. The condition of these human relics did not allow the determination of sex, so that no light can be thrown on the

⁸ Up to date details of the Thanet barrows pending in: L.V. Grinsell, *Bronze Age Round Barrows in Kent*.

⁹ S.D. Elworthy and D.R.J. Perkins, 'Newly discovered archaeological sites in the Isle of Thanet', *Arch. Cant.*, civ (1987), 333-5.

¹⁰ N. Macpherson-Grant and D.R.J. Perkins, *Thanet Archaeological Unit Interim Reports*, (1980), 7-11, and 18-20.

¹¹ I.L. Longworth, *op. cit.*, 19.

A BEAKER BURIAL FROM MANSTON

controversy surrounding sex variation in the body position in north-south orientated graves.¹²

While the disturbance could have taken place at any time in the last four millennia, the extraneous skeletal material, iron fragments, and the apparently rectangular 'modification' to the grave (see line 'D' and area B in Fig. 2), suggest the following hypothesis: that a Jutish burial was inserted in the fill of the pit, and that the beaker burial was disturbed either then, or perhaps when the Jutish grave was itself subsequently visited by grave-robbers. Excavations in the nearby barrow group and Jutish cemetery at Ozengell have provided parallels for Jutish re-use of prehistoric barrows, and have demonstrated a 60 per cent incidence of disturbed graves, so that such a sequence of events is not unlikely.¹³

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the landowner Mr David Steed for drawing attention to the site and encouraging excavation, and to Thanet District Council for their financial assistance.

D.R.J. PERKINS

APPENDIX I: NEOLITHIC SHERDS AND THE BEAKER

Sherds from the interface of ploughsoil with Burial 2

(a) Two rim-sherds in a light brown fabric with a grey core and with abundant coarse calcined flint inclusions. The inclusions are frequently over 4 mm. across and break both surfaces giving the sherds a rough, gritty feel; evidence of poorly bonded rings of clay is visible on both sherds. The decoration is impressed on the rim and a herringbone motif of short, oval impressions is on the rim and a similar motif of short, oval impressions, on the outer surface. The curvature of the sherds suggests that they come from a small hemispherical bowl, possibly within the later Neolithic impressed ware assemblage.

¹² See J.N. Lanting and J.D. Van der Waals, 'British Beakers as seen from the Continent', *Helinium*, 12 (1972), 20-46, and H. Case, in *Beakers in Great Britain and Europe*, BAR., 1977.

¹³ D.R.J. Perkins, 'Excavations in the Jutish Cemetery at Ozengell', in preparation.

(b) A single undecorated sherd very similar to the above, but pink. This may possibly be from an undecorated portion of the same vessel as above.

The Beaker from Burial 1

This is a small and heavily restored necked beaker in a light brown fabric with some grey patches of fire clouds, indicative of an open firing. The fabric core is grey, attesting a short and low temperature firing which has not succeeded in burning out the naturally occurring organic inclusions within the clay. Some grog inclusions are visible in the breaks and some few sand particles break both surfaces which are otherwise smooth and well-formed. The rim is simple and rounded, and the base has a slight foot-ring which is fairly well-defined on about half of the base diameter. As reconstructed the rim diameter of the vessel ranges from 10–11 cm., the base diameter is c. 6 cm. and the height varies from 14.5–16.5 cm.

The decoration has been executed mainly with a toothed comb, but this has been extremely carelessly used. In some cases, particularly on the upper half of the vessel, the impressions are blurred to such an extent that the decoration appears to be incised. It is only really in the lower half of the vessel that the comb impressions can be clearly seen. Encircling lines have been formed by overlapping each application of the comb, but this has been most careless, and it is frequently difficult to tell how many encircling lines had originally been intended. Overlaps in the individual lengths of comb suggest that the comb was c. 4 cm. long and had c. 20 roughly rectangular teeth.

The scheme of decoration, as reconstructed, comprises from the top a zone of impressed open chevrons, four encircling comb lines, a zone of standing filled triangles, three–four (variously) encircling combed lines, a further zone of filled standing triangles with a single encircling line below. This occupies the neck of the vessel and has a total depth of c. 7 cm. There is an undecorated zone around the waist of the vessel after which the belly decoration is haphazard in the extreme. Once more, as reconstructed, the decoration comprises five encircling lines two zones of standing filled triangle impressions separated from each other by a single encircling line, with five encircling lines below and then a final basal zone of paired finger-nail impressions. There is a degree of uncertainty over decoration of the lower portion of the pot, however, since the filled triangle zone is not double in all parts of the pot, but instead appears as an overlapping spiral. The paired finger-nail impressions are also only double in part of the circumference emphasising the haphazard nature of the decoration.

A BEAKER BURIAL FROM MANSTON

The vessel is somewhat contradictory: the fabric is fine, well-fired and well-finished; however, the shape of the pot is extremely lop-sided and the decoration carelessly executed. Care seems to have been taken in the preparation of the clay, but no care at all seems to have been paid to the forming and decorating of the pot.

The long neck, bulbous body and broad but simple decorative zones initially suggest a Rhenish affiliation, the low belly in particular being similar to many of the German Beakers illustrated in Clarke's corpus (e.g. Figs. 252, 258, 260, 262) and similar to the majority of the Dutch Protruding Foot Beaker groups (van der Waals and Glasbergen 1955). However, this profile can be attributed to the careless manufacture of the pot; it is likely that the clay has been too wet and consequently too plastic, causing the vessel to sag unequally. Nonetheless, the general shape of the Manston Beaker would place the vessel in Clarke's Developed Southern (S2) series and in step 6 of the sequence advocated by Lanting and van der Waals (Clarke 1970; Lanting and van der Waals 1972). The C¹⁴ date of 1680±50 bc (BM-2642), obtained from bone from the skeleton, is entirely in keeping with this identification being well within the date range for S2 Beakers in Britain (see Table 1.)

TABLE 1: RADIOCARBON DATES FOR S2 BEAKERS

Site	Date bc	Lab. No.	Date Range b.c.
Amesbury S1 (Wilts.)	1790 ± 55	BM 286	2274-2038
Irthlingborough (Northants.)	1730 ± 50	UB 3148	2140-1988
Manston (Kent)	1680 ± 50	BM 2642	2132-1922
Ravenstone (Bucks.)	1810 ± 90	HAR 3000	2334-2039
Wetwang Slack 8 (Yorks.)	1950 ± 100	HAR 4426	2564-2209
Ysgwennant (Denbighs.)	1475 ± 80	Birm 85	1880-1637

The association of the flint knife and jet button with the Manston Beaker is also in keeping with the S2 series as can be seen from Tables 2 above and 3 below. In addition to these S2 associations, a V-perforated button and flint knife association has been recorded with a S1 Beaker, 1 S3 Beaker and 1 S4 Beaker. Jet buttons, without knives, have been recorded with 1 N/NR Beaker, 2 N2 Beakers and 1

S1 Beaker. Flint knife associations have been recorded with 1 N/NR FN Beaker, 1 N3 Beaker and 1 N4 Beaker (Table 4). The instances of such associations are quite rare, and the number associated with S2 Beakers is remarkable, accounting for 10 of the 19 instances.

TABLE 2: S2 BEAKER, 'V'-BUTTON AND FLINT KNIFE ASSOCIATIONS

Site	Reference	Associations
Fenworthy (Devon)	Clarke 1970	Jet button, flint knife, bronze dagger.
Lambourne 31 (Berks.)	Clarke 197	Jet button, flint knife, 6 B and T arrowheads, flint flake.
West Cotton (Northants.)	Windell 1989	Jet button, flint knife, flint dagger, chalk.
Winterbourne Monkton (Wilts.)	Clarke 1970	Two jet buttons, S2 Beaker, jet belt ring, stone ?file hammerstone.
Winterbourne Stoke (Wilts.)	Clarke 1970	Jet button, flint knife, jet belt ring, two whetstones.
*Ysgwennant (Denbighs.)	Clarke 1970	Two jet buttons, flint knife, two jet belt rings, two whetstones, iron ore nodule, S2 Beaker.

TABLE 3: S2 BEAKER, AND 'V'-BUTTON OR FLINT KNIFE ASSOCIATIONS

Site	Reference	Associations
*Irthlingborough (Northants.)	Dix 1986	Five jet buttons, three spatulae, flint dagger, flint arrow-head, nine flint flakes, amber ring, whetstone, wrist-guard, boar's tusk.
Middleton-on-the-Wolds (Yorks.)	Clarke 1970	Two jet buttons, flint dagger bone awl, flint nodule, strike-a-light.
Llannon (Carms.)	Clarke 1970	Three flint knives.

* Radiocarbon date obtained from this burial.

A BEAKER BURIAL FROM MANSTON

TABLE 4: 'V'-BUTTON AND FLINT KNIFE ASSOCIATIONS WITH ALL BEAKER TYPES

A: Clarke	AOC	E	W/MR	N/MR	N/NR	E-ANG	BW	N1/D	N2	N3	N4	S1	S2	S3	S4
Button	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	3	-	-
Knife	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	-
Both	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-

B: Lanting and van der Waals

Step		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Button		-	-	1	1	3	2	-
Knife		-	-	-	-	1	2	1
Both		-	-	-	-	3	6	1

All these associations are with stylistically developed pottery suggesting that they are late in the Beaker sequence as, indeed the Manston, Ysgwennant and Irthlingborough dates show (Table 1). In addition to the instances of association listed in Tables 2, 3 and 4 and the dates in Table 1, 33 V-perforated buttons were found in a grave at Green Knowe, Peeblesshire and TPO date of 1875±95 bc (GU 1215) was recovered for them (Jobey 1978-80).

Stylistically, the Manston Beaker is one of the latest in Kent belonging, as it does, to Clarke's Southern series. Nearest Kentish parallels to this vessel might be the S1 Beaker from Folkestone (Clarke 1970, 391), which has a similarly developed profile but has narrow zone decoration or an S1 vessel from Brendly (Clarke 1970, 387) with a similar profile to the Manston Vessel, but with more developed decoration. Two Kentish N3 Beakers, one from Folkestone (Clarke 1970, 392) and one from Dover (Clarke 1970, 397) both differ dramatically from the Manston vessel, having rather more squat profiles and well-executed comb impressions in three main zones. There is also an element of vertical decoration in the case of the Dover pot. Another N3 Beaker from Folkestone (Clarke 1970, 401) has a markedly bipartite profile and, as on the Manston vessel, employs simple motifs in the decorative scheme.

If assigned to the step scheme of Lanting and van der Waals (1972) the above Beakers all fall within steps 4 and 6 of the sequence (Table 5). Beakers are quite rare in Kent. Clarke lists only some 30 finds and although more have been discovered since, the corpus has not grown significantly. By far the majority of these Beakers are early in the sequence and yet more early sherds have been identified at the 'Lord of the Manor' (Inf. D. Perkins and N. Macpherson-Grant). The only stylistically later vessels known to the writer are listed below (Table 5). Nevertheless, larger assemblages have come to light from Holywell Coombe and the Folkestone area. These include some later elements as part of a domestic assemblage (Gibson forthcoming); however, they hardly redress the imbalance. The majority of Kentish Beakers are pre-step 4 and we must be left to assume that the Beaker presence here is either somewhat short-lived or that long-lived regional styles have not yet been fully identified.

A.M. GIBSON

TABLE 5: TYPOLOGY OF KENTISH BEAKERS

Site	Clarke No.	Type	Step
Folkestone	391	S1	4
Folkestone	401	N3	5
Brendly	387	S1	6
Dover	397	N3	6
Folkestone	392	N3	6

REFERENCES

- Clarke 1970 J.D. Clarke, *The Beaker Pottery of Great Britain and Ireland*, Cambridge, 1970.
- Dix 1986 (Ed.) B. Dix, 'The Raunds Area Project: Second Interim Report', *Northamptonshire Archaeology*, 13 (1986), 3-13.
- Gibson forthcoming A.M. Gibson, 'The Neolithic and Beaker Pottery from Holywell Coombe and other Channel Tunnel Sites'.
- Lanting and van der Waals 1972 J.N. Lanting and J.D. van der Waals, 'British Beakers as seen from the Continent', *Helinium*, xii (1972), 20-46.
- Waals and Glasbergen 1955 J.D. van der Waals and W. Glasbergen, 'Beaker Types and their Distribution in the Netherlands', *Palaeohistoria*, iv (1955), 5-46.
- Windell 1989 D. Windell, 'A Neolithic Ritual Focus at West Cotton, Northamptonshire', in (Ed.) A.M. Gibson, *Midlands Prehistory*, BAR No. 204, Oxford, 1989, 85-94.

A BEAKER BURIAL FROM MANSTON

APPENDIX II: MOLLUSCAN EVIDENCE FROM THE FILL STRATA OF THE DITCH

Soil samples for molluscan analysis were taken from a section in each quadrant of the ditch. Sample columns were divided vertically into three, each sample being adjusted in height so as to coincide with one of the three main phases of infill. Ditch sections of similar depth and profile were chosen, so that typically, samples were cut with a vertical span of 15 cm. This sampling strategy was employed so as to minimise bias caused by preferential weathering or dryness of the ditch where exposed to the prevailing south-westerlies, as against the shady and damp up-hill northern aspect. In the event, the distribution of species by layer was found to be fairly uniform in all quadrants.

All samples were of a standard weight (as cut) of 1.5 kg. They were air-dried, and processed by wet and dry sieving through meshes down to 300 μ aperture. Shells were extracted and sorted using a stereoscopic microscope of $\times 40$ magnification. The resultant species counts (in the form of percentages of layer population) are presented in Fig. 4.

INTERPRETATION

Some degree of caution must be exercised when interpreting molluscan evidence from ditch fills, since our conception of what constitutes shade or woodland may not be shared by a snail 2 mm. in diameter. In general, however, as Evans points out,¹⁴ the snail population of a ditch reflects that of the surrounding landscape as a whole. Moreover, if the ditch is isolated and not part of a system, there is far less chance of colonisation by shade-loving species, as they will not migrate through an inimical environment.

The lowest sample level of the ditch contains a primary fill, which must in part be derived from collapsed turfs and topsoil from the horizon through which the ditch was cut. It should, therefore, be informative as to the environment prior to, or contemporary with, ditch construction. As can be seen, open country species account for more than 50 per cent of the snails in this layer. The component of shade-loving species exceeds 30 per cent, however, this including *A. lamellata*, a dedicated woodland snail. Comparison with the modern soil profiles given by Evans¹⁵ would seem to suggest that we

¹⁴ J.G. Evans, *Land Snails in Archaeology*, London, 1972.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 236-9 and Fig. 77 (a).

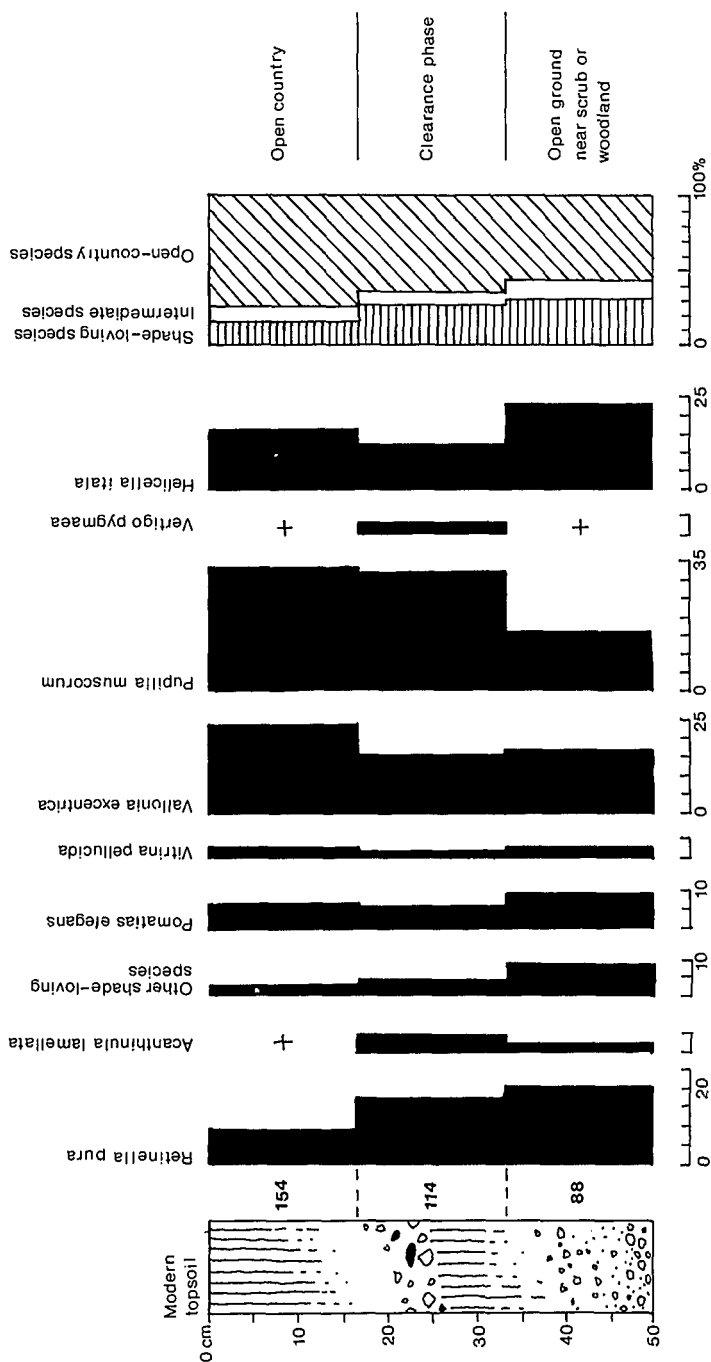


Fig. 4. Land snails from the barrow ditch.

are here looking at a grassland and scrub environment with old deciduous woodland nearby.

The next sample layer in ascending order has no firm upper boundary in most sections, although distinguished by its content of chalk nodules, perhaps derived from the erosion of an outer bank. Despite these, most of the layer probable came there by colluvial deposition or *in situ* soil formation. There is a marked increase in open country species with a corresponding diminution of shade lovers. The latter still represent *c.* 25 per cent of the population, however, so that a slow clearance phase is indicated.¹⁶

Above, and up to the modern level of chalk bedrock, there is a featureless layer of brown loam. Snail counts in this clearly indicate an open grassland environment. Ditch profiles in the nearby Ozengell barrow group often exhibit layered concentrations of *P. elegans*, these inferring the periodic breaking of ground for agriculture.¹⁷ No such concentrations were here observed, perhaps negative evidence pointing to prolonged use of the down for grazing before it came under the plough in the Iron Age.¹⁸

D.R.J. PERKINS

¹⁶ This would fit in with both local geology and historic record, since the barrow lies close to the edge of Thanet's central plateau with its deep brickearth overburden, an area rich in woodland until the sixteenth century.

¹⁷ Unpublished material related to the excavation of 'the Lord of the Manor' barrow group in the keeping of Thanet Archaeological Society.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*