

Dating is uncertain but there seem to be three main periods of use, possibly corresponding to the three main phases of enclosure building seen in the inner enclosure bank:

- (i) the roundhouses and industrial evidence (perhaps enclosed by a simple rubble bank),
- (ii) the partitioned timber structure (perhaps associated with the dumping of clay and gravel on the back of the rubble bank), and
- (iii) the timber framed buildings (enclosed by an unstructured rubble rampart, revetted by a row of stone blocks wedged in place by slabs on a cut shelf, and with what may be a row of approx. 30cm diameter postholes along the top of the bank).

The first of these periods is presumably prehistoric, perhaps Iron-Age. The last may be second century A.D. or later, but is not associated with Roman or later pottery, perhaps making a second to fourth-century A.D., or post-twelfth-century A.D. date unlikely. The hut-scoops may pre-date the first enclosure, and the pits of the final phase cut erosion deposits from the final bank.

Excavation is planned for 1988 on the gateway-site begun in 1987 where only superficial deposits were removed this year, and radio-carbon dating, and possibly thermoluminescent-dating, are being undertaken.

## Excavation at Brawdy Hill-fort

1987

### An Interim Report

The 1985-6 10x20m site, in the centre of the hill-fort enclosure, was excavated to the natural weathered Cambrian red sandstone surface. Into this, only partly within the excavated area, were cut two negative curvilinear features with sharply sloping sides, one ringed by inward-sloping stakeholes in the base -hut-scoops?- (the one in the south-west of the site shown in Sketch Plan 1).

Two 6m diameter roundhouses (Sketch Plan 1), each having posthole southern sides, with a curvilinear gully on the northern side, probably followed this phase. One by the bank seems to have had a hearth on the natural, close to one of the posthole sides. An approximately 10m diameter roundhouse with no gully, and stone-packed postholes (two stones fitting together from adjacent postholes in one case) cut the gully of one of the 6m roundhouses, but underlay midden deposits of more than one phase piled against a low (approximately 20cm) step in the natural parallel with the bank. The midden (Sketch Plan 2) may be associated with two curvilinear 0.5m diameter hearths -one probably used for iron-working- each of several phases, comprising multiple uses (shown by alternating lenses of soil and charcoal).

A major 1m wide x 0.5m deep U-profile ditch (Sketch Plan 1) cut one of the roundhouse gullies and may have been earlier than the hearths (Sketch Plans 1 and 2). It ran parallel to the bank across the excavated area, and may belong to the same phase as the c. 10m diameter roundhouse. Erosion deposits above the hearths and midden were cut by the postholes of a timber structure, at least 6m across (Sketch Plan 3). Postholes marked A are similar, and may be the corner posts for a rectangular building or, alternatively, free-standing posts outside a curvilinear structure; whatever the plan, the structure would seem to be partitioned. This structure, of at

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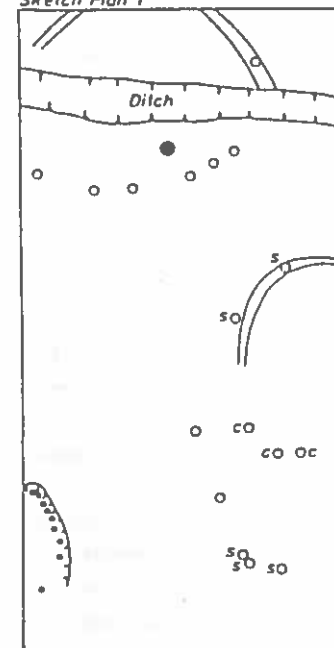
# Interior

least two phases, had semi-circular postholes, and was in turn sealed by erosion deposits. The overlying layer was cut by a 1m wide x 0.5m deep rectilinear negative feature adjacent, and parallel, to the bank. This contained several fills including much stone, burnt-stone and charcoal. It may be a ditch, pit, or robbed-out structure. This was sealed by two compact deposits of sandstone fragments (Sketch Plan 4), most under 0.5cms in size ('gravel'), forming rectilinear areas; one was thicker than the other and disturbed by later features, the other extended beyond the limits of the 1987 excavation to the north and east. The gravel was worn in some areas but not uniformly eroded, and there were some larger very worn stones. Daub fragments concentrate horizontally on these two areas and on one similar thin 'gravel' area, 5m of worn gravel to the south of the site extending beyond the excavated area to the south, east and west. This 'gravel-area' had a projecting 2.5m x 3m wing to the east of the excavated area.

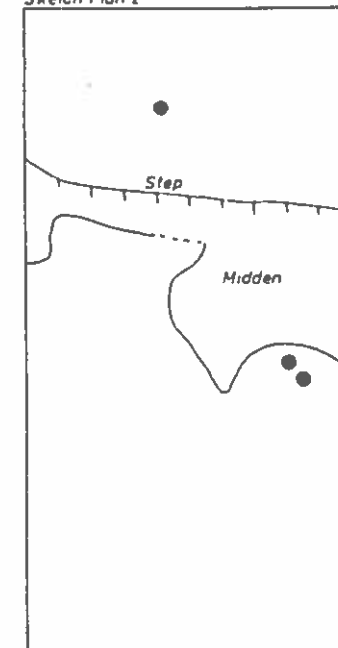
These 'gravel-areas' may be interpreted (as at Moel-y-Gaer) as the floors of timber-framed buildings, and the thicker gravel was perhaps a stance for a similar structure (as at Hen Domen). These structures were overlaid by erosion deposits, which were cut into by the yellow sand-filled postholes of a small timber structure, in turn sealed by erosion deposits cut by subsequent vertical edged pits of more than one phase. These were overlaid, when full, by topsoil deposits.

Over 2,000 finds include a little pottery, daub, iron slag and a few iron and bronze objects (including square section iron nails), much charcoal and some calcined animal bone. A large quantity of utilised stones include sandstone, igneous stones, beach-pebbles, coal, flint, obsidian, slate (some with round nail or peg holes), coarse grinding-stone, and even chalk. No obviously wheel-made pottery is associated with any structure, and the little mediaeval pottery does not seem securely sealed, but it now seems that it will be possible to isolate sealed groups of finds in post-excitation work, notwithstanding the root and animal intrusions into the upper-layers. These have largely left structural evidence undamaged and do not seem to have disturbed the hearths.

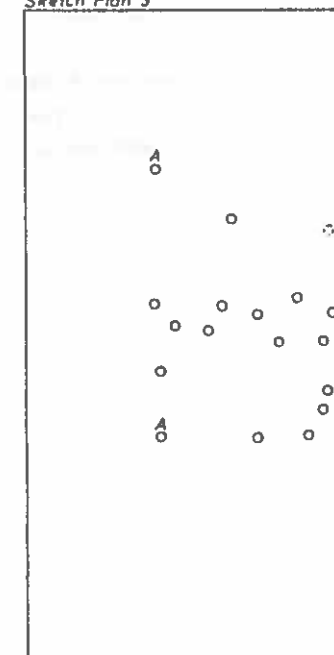
Sketch Plan 1



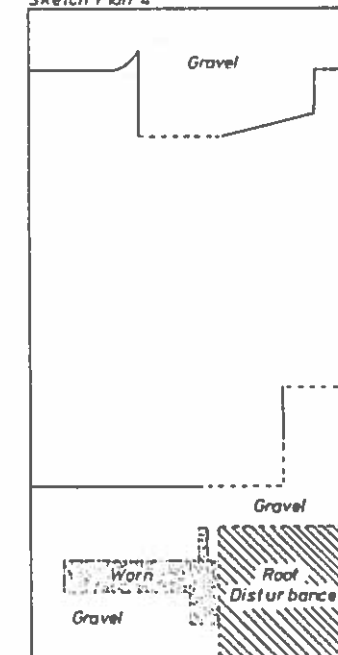
Sketch Plan 2



Sketch Plan 3



Sketch Plan 4



0 1 2 3 4 5  
Metres  
(approximate scale)

These Sketch Plans show only the features referred to in the text.