

WALLED ENCLOSURES OF THE IRON AGE IN THE NORTH OF THE NETHERLANDS

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1. INTRODUCTION

The North of the Netherlands and the adjacent parts of Germany have so far given little evidence for social and economic differentiation during the pre-Roman Iron Age. There are in this area no chariot graves, no Etruscan imports, no rich Celtic ornaments, no finds of Celtic coins or wheel-made pottery, no hillforts such as occur in the Celtic world south of the Rhine and the Lippe, and across the North Sea in Britain. Further north, in Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland, we find again strong Celtic influences, as shown *e.g.* by the famous cauldrons of Gundestrup and Brå, by the Husby and Kraghede



Fig. 1. Map of the Netherlands, with location of the Zeijen-Vries area.

chariot burials and by the presence of a few Celtic coins of British origin. In the many big urnfields of the Harburg-Lüneburg area, too, there is a great variety of imports from the Celtic world (mostly small iron and bronze objects).

At first glance, therefore, the districts between the Elbe and the Rhine estuaries stand out by their pooriness. As we shall see this may to some extent

be an illusion created by quirks of the archaeological record.

In this paper I shall review the evidence from settlements excavated in the area. In particular I shall deal with four sites (two near Zeijen, one at Vries and one at Rhee), that have given evidence of enclosures of roughly rectangular shape, formed by a combination of an earthen bank and one or more palisades. These enclosures can be dated between 200 B.C. and A.D. 50. The excavations in question have all been published before, but new drawings have been made on the basis of the original field documentation, and in a number of details my interpretation differs from that of the original excavators. Before dealing in detail with these sites, it is necessary to discuss the nature of the archaeological record in the area and the problems of dating the stages present at the sites.

Mr. H. Praamstra, who drew all the plans, assisted also with the interpretation. Mr. O. H. Harsema and Mr. G. de Leeuw of the Provinciaal Museum van Drenthe at Assen facilitated the study of the pottery of the sites. Mr. J. M. Smit made the pottery drawings. Dr. J. J. Butler improved the English text. Miss M. Bierma prepared the manuscript.

2. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD

During the Iron Age three different environments were inhabited in the North of the Netherlands, *viz.* (1) the sandy uplands in the hinterland, which had continuously been exploited since Neolithic times, (2) the narrow, heavily forested river banks in the Rhine, Vecht and Ems estuaries, and (3) the treeless and brackish coastal marshes of Friesland and Groningen.

In the sandy uplands the population was thinned out by a first wave of migration into the coastal and river marshes newly formed after the Dunkirk Ia transgression (Waterbolk, 1959; 1962). For the North of the Netherlands the migration process is demonstrated by the roughly contemporaneous start of many coastal and riverine settlements, by the rarity in the sandy districts of pottery finds of the later pre-Roman Iron Age as compared with such finds from the early part of the Iron Age, and by the fact that many cemeteries that begin in the Late Bronze Age do not continue beyond the early

part of the Iron Age. A key position in the local sequence is occupied by the pottery type RW I. This pottery type, which appears in the 7th century B.C., characterises the earliest marsh settlements; at the same time it has a wide occurrence in the hinterland, both in settlements and cemeteries.

In the early part of the Iron Age the burial ritual in the hinterland underwent changes. Whilst in the Late Bronze Age cemeteries the interments consisted of selected cremated bones buried, often in an urn, in a pit surrounded by a circular or oblong ring-ditch, the ritual in the Iron Age became more varied. Burials of selected cremated bones in urns continue for some time, but a surrounding ring-ditch is mostly lacking. In the course of the Iron Age, the normal rite becomes the covering of the place of the cremation pyre with a low mound of earth from a surrounding ditch of circular or, more often, square or rectangular form, or with a barrow of inverted sods. Such pyre barrows may be surrounded by a circular or square ditch, or by a circular or square fence made from thin stakes, or not be fenced at all. The mounds may be of various height. Often different rites occur together in one cemetery, such as at Zeijen (Van Giffen, 1949), Ballo (Van Giffen, 1935), Gasteren (Van Giffen, 1945) and Laudermarke (Van Giffen, 1931). Sometimes one rite seems to be dominant, as at Ruinen (square and rectangular ditches only) (Waterbolk, 1965) or at Havelte (pyre barrows without any peripheral structures) (Van Giffen, 1951).

The important point is that grave finds in these pyre barrow cemeteries are extremely rare. If present they consist of secondarily burnt and often undefinable pottery fragments and equally badly preserved pieces of iron, bronze and glass (*e.g.* so-called *Segelobrringe*). In most cases no "archaeological" dating is possible. Available radiocarbon dates (Lanting & Mook, 1977) suggest that this burial ritual went on being practiced until the beginning of our era.

Evidently, it did not favour the deposition and preservation of luxury ware. There is thus a marked contrast with the areas beyond the Weser, where cremation urns continue to be used throughout the Iron Age and where small iron and bronze grave goods are frequently met with.

In the coastal marshes we do not know any re-

gular Iron Age cemeteries from the many flourishing *terp* settlements. They were probably situated outside the *terps* and covered by later sediments. But at least in one cultural stage (Protofrisian culture), roughly dated between 350 and 200 B.C., the *terp* pottery (type RW III) is richly decorated with incised geometric patterns of obvious southern derivation. Imported Latène bronze ornaments, fibulae and glass rings do occur in the contemporaneous *terp* deposits (Boeles, 1951), but as usual in settlements they are rare. If the burial grounds were known, our picture of this Protofrisian culture might be quite different.

Our knowledge of the Iron Age people living in the river marshes is restricted. Apart from the settlements of Jemgum (Haarnagel, 1957) and Boomborg-Hatzum (Haarnagel, 1969^b) on the Ems, no other site has been more than superficially examined.

At the Early Iron Age site of Boomborg-Hatzum six successive habitation plans were excavated. Each phase consisted of about six farmsteads of roughly equal size. Burials have so far not been discovered in this environment. Of course, here too, chances of finding them are reduced by later sediment covers.

Another reason for the apparent poorness of the Iron Age in the North of the Netherlands may be the fact that some finds of a richer character have so far only very incompletely been dealt with in publications. Three of these finds may actually represent ploughed-up grave inventories.

(1) The well-known dagger from Havelte in the Assen Museum (Early Latène I, according to Jope, 1961) was found in 1923, probably together with a number of fragmentary bronze and iron objects (arm-rings, arrow-heads, knife, etc.). The dagger must be an import from Northern France. At about the same spot an urn filled with cremated bones had been found a few days before. It is probably the pot of RW I-type, acquired by the Assen Museum on the same occasion as the dagger and the other metal objects. Only the dagger and the pot have been published (Clarke & Hawkes, 1955; Waterbolk, 1965).

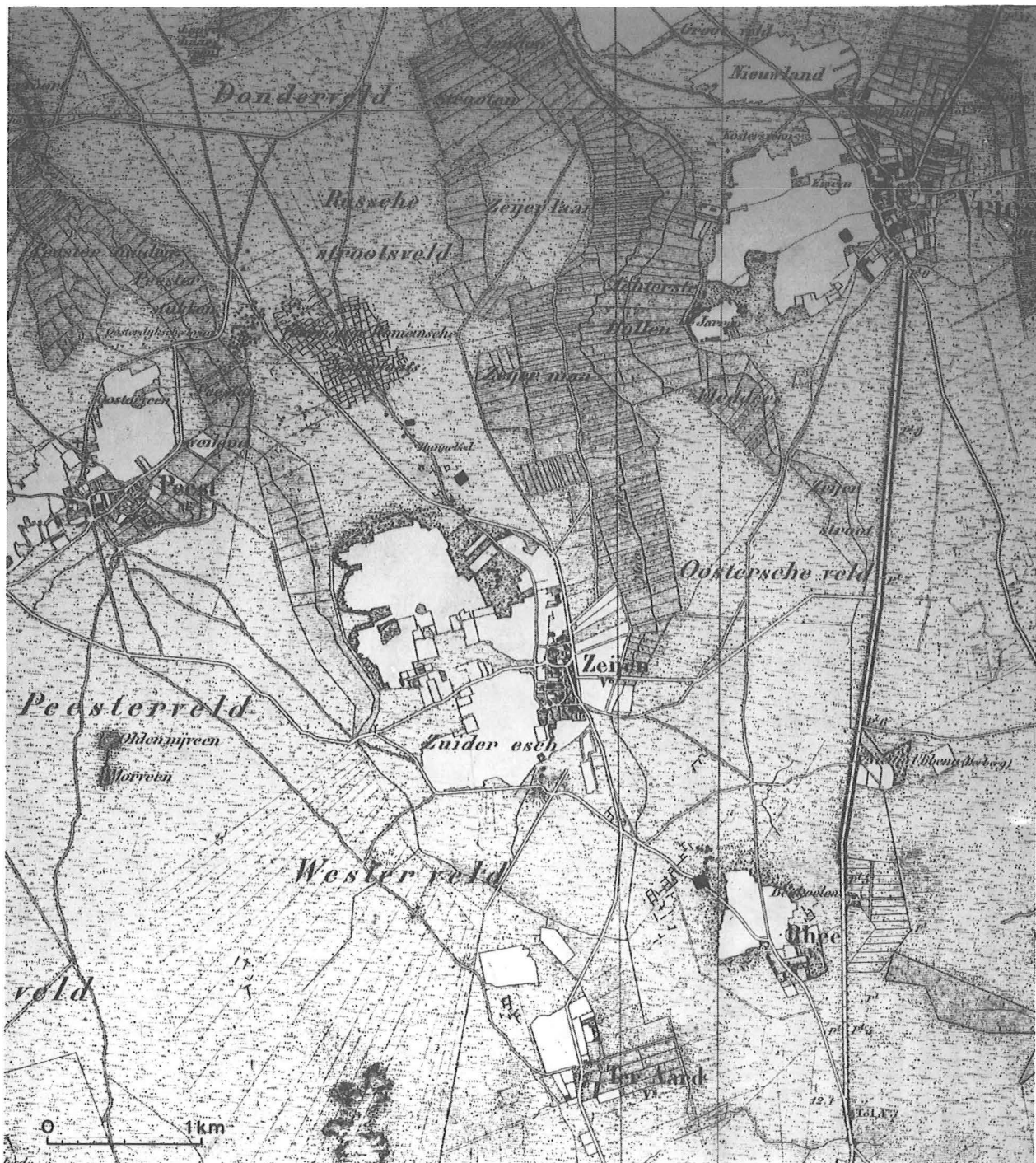
(2) Much less known is an important though poorly preserved find, also from Havelte, acquired by the Leyden Museum in 1911 and found about three years before. It has been brought to our no-



Fig. 2. Location of the sites of Zeijen I, II, Vries and Rhee.

tice by Dr. G. J. Verwers of Leyden. It consists of a pot of RW I-type, a plate of a type regularly associated with RW I-pottery, and a number of

bronze and iron objects, among which there are a spear-head, a number of iron arrow-heads and fragments of what is probably a horse bit. Cremated bones are encrusted in the iron oxide, showing that this find too was probably the inventory of a cremation grave.



The original location of the Havelte finds is imprecisely known, but there is reason to suppose that they come from one cemetery, which unfortunately has been destroyed for the greater part by sand dune formation and afforestation.

(3) The Assen Museum has a find from Anlo

Fig. 3. Location of the sites on the topographical map of \pm 1860.

consisting of two bronze disc ornaments, three bronze sword chapes and fragments of a bronze vessel. It was discovered near a barrow over a

cremation pyre, and may therefore also be a grave inventory. It has been mentioned by De Laet & Glasbergen (1959), but the objects have never been dealt with in a systematic way.

There are also a few bog hoards, consisting of ornamental objects of Latène date. The best known is that of Nieuw-Weerdinge, consisting of two massive bronze arm rings, a bronze neckring and a string of amber beads (Remouchamps, 1925). It is in the collection of the Leyden Museum. Another find of amber beads, together with an arm ring of lignitic shale, comes from a peaty depression on the Eese estate (gem. Vledder) (Waterbolk, 1957). It is in private possession.

The above inventory, which may not be complete, shows that Iron Age society in the North of the Netherlands might, after all, have been more differentiated than would appear from the published record.

3. DATING

At each of the sites of Zeijen, Vries and Rhee there are traces of both earlier and later occupation. Dating of the stages mainly depends on the characteristic features of the neck and rim of well-developed medium-sized specimens of the high wide-mouthed cooking-vessels that dominate among the associated pottery forms. Of course, alongside such vessels other pottery forms always occur, such as plates, cups, bucket-shaped pots, bowls, miniature vessels, storage jars, etc. They, too, are subject to typological variations, which can be used for chronological studies. In most cases, however, these forms are less sensitive in the chronological sense than the standard vessels. Quite often, the neck – if present – and rim of these forms show variations parallel to those of the wide-mouthed cooking-pots. This applies, for example, to the bucket-shaped pots of Harpstedt type in the earlier part and the funnel cups in the later part of the period under discussion (roughly 700 B.C.–200 A.D.).

For these reasons, we restrict ourselves here to an enumeration of the types of the main series. Van Es (1967; 1968) has made two different efforts to establish a complete typology of the pottery from the Roman period (Wijster) and the later part of the Iron Age (Paddepoel). Though partly overlapping

in time, these typologies are not fully integrated. For the earlier part of the Iron Age, the typology published by the author (Waterbolk, 1962) will be used in a slightly adapted form.

- 1) Ruinen-Wommels I (RW I): wide-mouthed vessels with S-profile; neck long, slightly bent out and well set off from the shoulder, which may be emphasized by a groove line; rim undifferentiated.
- 2) RW II: as RW I, but neck provided with either a basal thickening or with a slightly thickened, more or less everted rim; both the neck base and the rim base may be emphasized by a groove line.
- 3) RW III: vessels of globular shape; neck short, clearly set off from the shoulder, slightly curved, either undifferentiated, or provided with RW II features in reduced or rudimentary form.
- 4) RW IV (= approximately Paddepoel IV E): vessels with globular or egg-shaped body; neck short or somewhat elongated, distinctly curved, sometimes somewhat sunk; rim everted, with a broad upper and a narrow lateral facet.

N.B. The label RW IV has not been used before; it emphasizes the close genetic relation with the other RW types. Van Es' typology is purely descriptive; his types – indicated with numbers and letters – have no chronological or genetic connotation.

- 5) Paddepoel IV A (PP IV A): neckless vessels with globular body; rim short, thickened, sharply everted and provided with 3 or 4 facets.

PP IV D (= approximately Wijster IV A): neckless vessels with globular or egg-shaped body; rim bent outward, not thickened, sometimes with an upper and/or lateral facet.

PP IV C (= approximately Wijster IV B): neckless vessels with globular or egg-shaped body; rim bent outward, thickened, unfaceted or with one or two facets.

- 6) Wijster II B (W II B = approximately Paddepoel II and III A): neckless vessels with globular or egg-shaped body; rim clearly set off, straight or only slightly curved, with parallel-sided section (W II B₁, W II B₃) or segment-shaped section (W II B₂).

Other features may help in differentiating between these types, such as the position, number and form of lugs and handles, the paste and temper of

the clay used by the potters and the style and technique of the ornaments. For example, a single, perforated lug on the shoulder-neck transition is a typical RW I feature, while 2, 3 or 4 angular handles connecting the shoulder with the rim are common with the RW IV and PP IV D types. Ornamentation with bundles of parallel incised lines forming geometrical patterns is very developed on the RW III type, but occurs also, though in a slightly different style, with the PP IV A-type. A horizontal groove at the base of the neck, made with a blunt, double or triple pointed tool (*streeppand*) is a characteristic feature of the RW IV type, but occurs also with the PP IV C and D types. Single fingertip-impressions on the rim, if present, occur generally on the top of the rim with the RW I-III types. With the later types the impressions are mostly laterally placed and much more varied in form. Study of the paste, temper and baking environment will most certainly disclose differences, which at least in part will have some chronological significance. We have not dealt with these aspects.

On radiocarbon evidence the appearance of the various RW types can be dated as follows:

- (1) RW I : from c. 650 B.C.
- (2) RW II : from c. 500 B.C.
- (3) RW III: from c. 350 B.C.
- (4) RW IV: from c. 200 B.C.

Mainly following Van Es' arguments, based on comparison with material from the Weser-Elbe region, the following dates can be given for the younger types:

- (5) PP IV A: from c. 50 B.C.
- PP IV C: from c. A.D. 0
- PP IV D: from c. 50 B.C.

N.B. In his summary table Van Es places the beginning of both his PP IV C and D types at c. A.D. 0, but he leaves the possibility open for an earlier start, which we prefer, at least for the PP IV D type. According to Van Es the PP IV A type should have a much shorter life than the PP IV C and D types.

- (6) W II B : from c. A.D. 100.

Though each of these dates may easily be half a century off, a mean interval of c. 150 years between the appearance of the main types appears to be well documented.

It should be realized that the types only gradually become dominant, and that they never re-

place each other completely. Also, there are transitional or poorly developed forms, that are hard to classify. Only closed find complexes that contain a sufficient quantity of well-defined pottery specimens can be placed in the indicated time intervals.

Ideally, the technique of seriation could provide us with a more detailed chronology. For lack of large find complexes of undisputable association, the present material does not permit us to apply this technique in the strict sense. But in some cases the type composition of the find complexes may suggest an early, middle or late position within the intervals.

The material from our sites proves that the type sequence, which originally was mainly based on material from the clay marshes, is indeed equally valid for the hinterland. In fact, the area of investigation itself has produced for each interval at least one representative find complex. Placed in chronological order these complexes illustrate the above-mentioned principle of gradual replacement of one type by the next. Also they give some impression of the general form composition of the complexes. It may therefore be useful to refer to them already before the systematic treatment of the individual sites.

A typical RW I complex was found in 1960 at Zeijen (Waterbolk, 1961) in an isolated settlement pit on the *es*. The pit contained the remains of 8 RW I pots, 2 bucket-shaped pots of Harpstedt type, 3 plates and an ornamented wall sherd. One of the RW I pots was ornamented with vertical impressions of a bronze Ha D armring. A number of find complexes from Rhee (this paper, fig. 61-63) are of the same nature.

The RW II type is represented in two complexes from the area. The complex from de Vledders, gem. Norg – only 4 km west of Zeijen (Waterbolk, 1959^b) – consists of material from an uncontrolled excavation; its composition suggests that it was probably a closed find. There are 4 pots with RW II profiles, 1 pot with RW I profile, a plate and a number of sherds of bucket-shaped pots (fig. 72). The complex from Zeijen was found immediately north of the Witteveen (see below) in a bank of a Celtic field system (Waterbolk, 1977). It contains mostly small fragments of RW I, RW II and RW III pots, as well as of plates, etc. (fig. 73).

The RW III type is best represented by a small



Fig. 4. Zeijen II: eastern passage, seen from the S. In the background the bog Witteveen. Photo B.A.I. 1944.

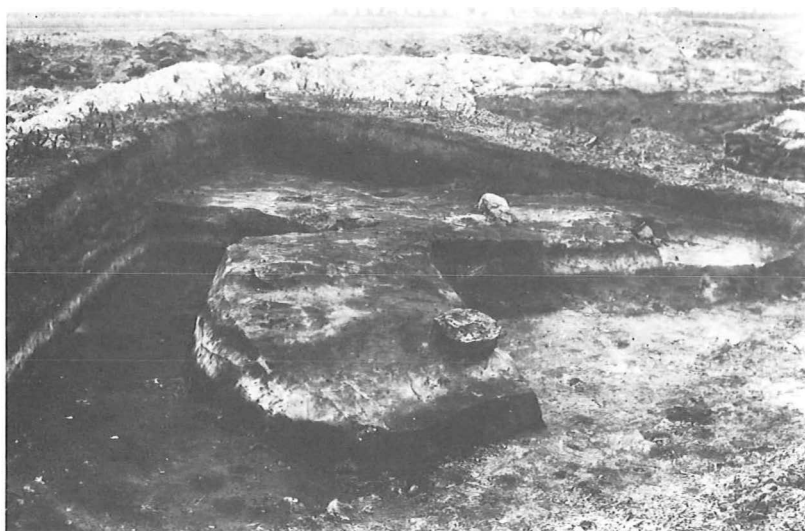


Fig. 5. Zeijen II: longitudinal section of sod bank in SE corner of enclosure, seen from the N. Photo B.A.I. 1944.

but highly characteristic find complex from Rhee (fig. 67). The ornamented pot has all the characteristics of its counterparts from the clay marshes.

The RW IV type is amply represented among the large material from the ditches of the Zeijen I-2 enclosure (fig. 25), but since it is possible that the filling of the ditches continued in the period that the Zeijen I-3 enclosure was used, the time span covered by this material may be too long for direct comparison with the other complexes. I therefore mention the complexes from Rhee (fig. 69) and Zeijen I (fig. 27).

The PP IV A type is best represented in find complex 6 (fig. 29) from Zeijen I. It is absent in find complex 35 from Zeijen II (fig. 12), which mainly consists of types PP IV D and PP IV C.

The only complex with W II B types was found in Zeijen I (fig. 30).

The reinterpretation of the sites of Zeijen II, Zeijen I, Vries and Rhee is not restricted to the dating of the stages, it also concerns the house plans. Since the publication of the original reports, a number of excavated settlement sites have produced important reference material. Mention can

Fig. 6. Zeijen II: southern defences, seen from the E. Photo B.A.I. 1944.



Fig. 7. Zeijen II: section through ditch with palisade. Photo B.A.I. 1944.



be made of the sites of Elp (Waterbolk, 1964), Angelslo and Emmerhout (Van der Waals, 1966; Butler, 1969), Hijken (Harsema, 1974), Noord Barge (Harsema, 1976), Wijster (Van Es, 1967) and Odoorn (Waterbolk, 1973). This material is of great help in sorting out, interpreting and dating the individual house plans, and in making the special character of the walled enclosures more apparent.

Apart from the house types themselves, one detail of the houses, namely the width of the stall boxes, has an independent dating value. Elsewhere

(Waterbolk, 1975) I demonstrated that the mean width per house of the stall boxes decreases from c. 1.10 m in the Early Bronze Age to c. 0.70 m in the Middle Ages, in line with the decrease in cattle size known from osteological studies. In a few cases, where there were no other possibilities, this feature was used to suggest an attribution of undated house plans to definite stages.

As to the cultural environment in which the development described takes place, it has been suggested elsewhere (Waterbolk, 1962) to use the terms *Zeijen culture* for the cultural stage dated by the

0 10 20 m

Fig. 8. Zeijen II: general plan. Scale 1:500.

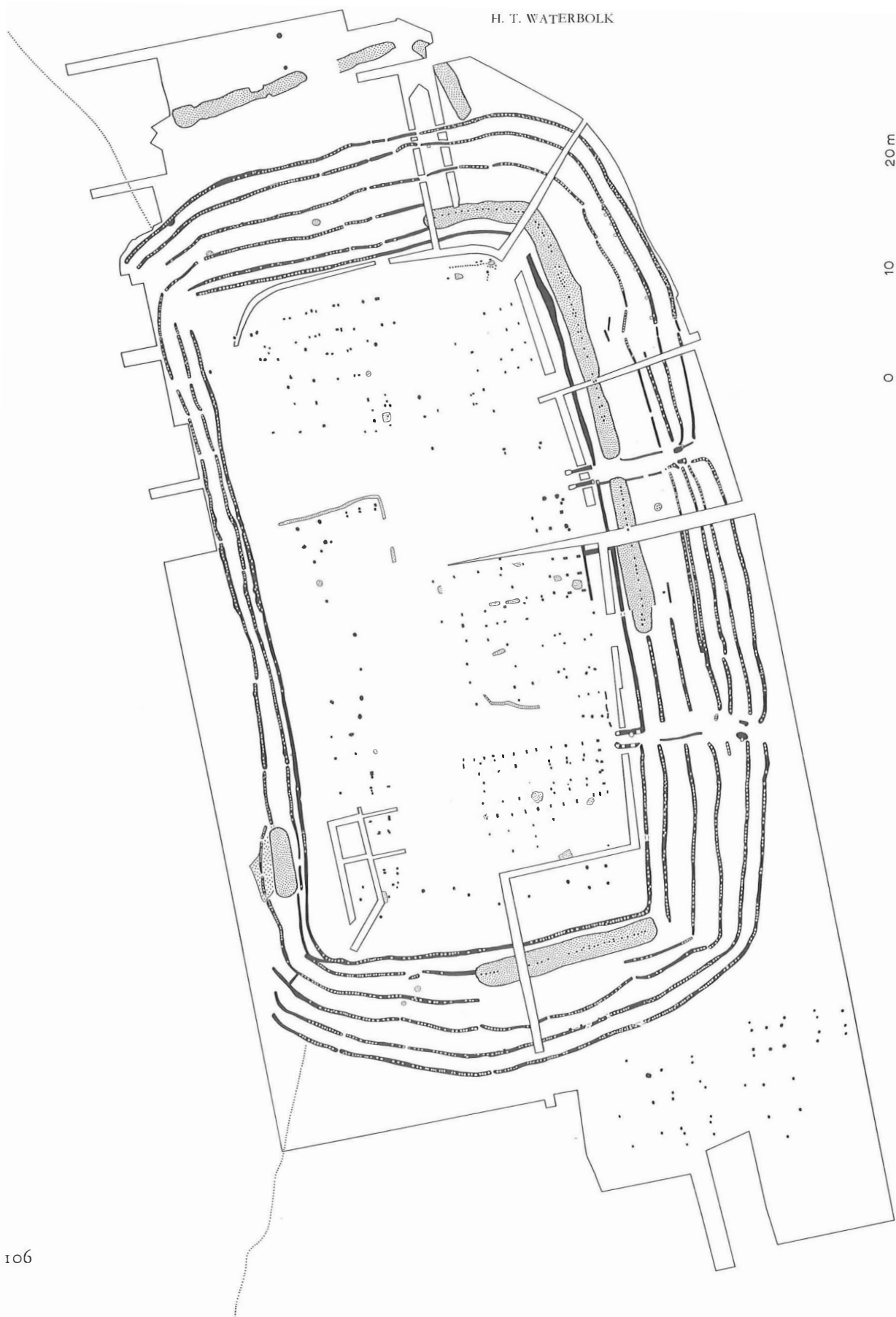
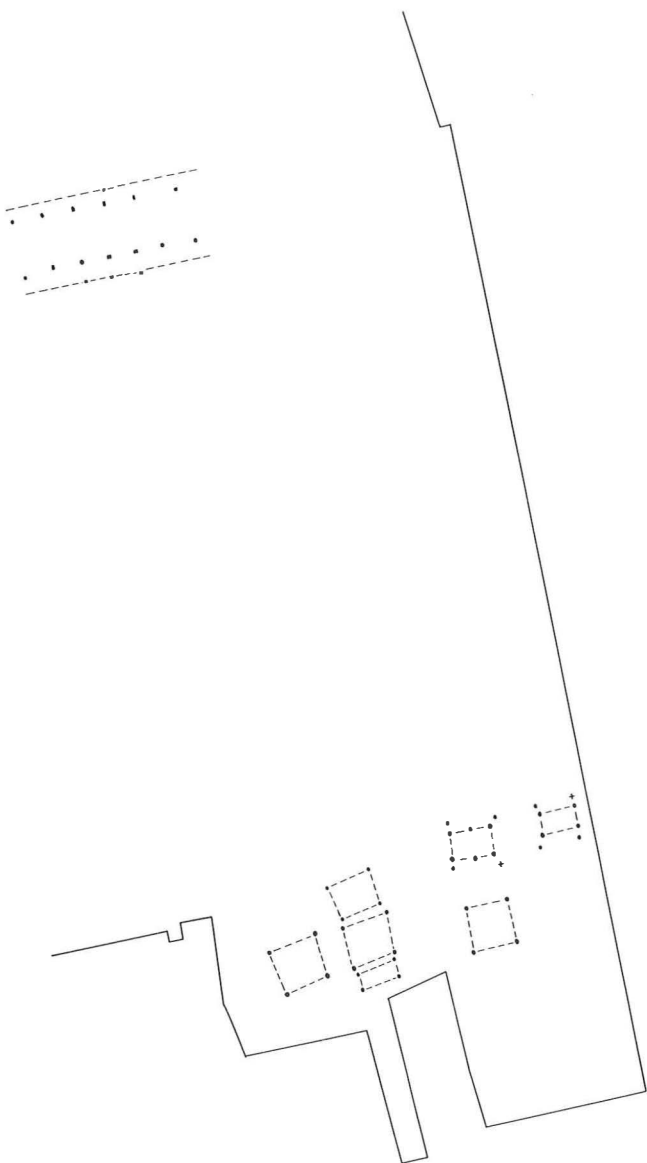


Fig. 9. Zeijen II: phase 1. Scale 1:500.



RW I and II types, *Protofrisian culture* for the stage with the RW III type, and *Frisian culture* for the stages dated by the *streefband* ornamented ware. This means that both the stages with RW IV and that with PP IV A, D, C should be reckoned to the Frisian culture. For the last stage in our sequence, where influences from the Weser-Elbe area seem to acquire dominance over the local traditions, the main distribution area of the typical pottery types no longer coincides with the area indicated by the Roman authors as inhabited by the Frisii. For the time being any cultural attribution of this stage seems premature.

4. THE ZEIJEN ENCLOSURES

On the Noordse Veld, a stretch of heathland, now under cultivation with the exception of a reserve of 75 ha, Van Giffen excavated two settlements, a southern one which he called the *versterking naar Romeins patroon* ("the fort of Roman pattern") (1934) (Van Giffen, 1936^b) and a northern one, the *legerplaats* ("the camp") (1944-'46) (Van Giffen, 1950). I shall call them Zeijen I and II respectively. Their distance from one another is only 400 m and there are no geographical barriers of any kind in between.

I shall argue later on that Zeijen I precedes Zeijen II.

The Noordse Veld is a low ridge between the upper courses of two brook valleys which run parallel in NNW direction (figs. 2, 3). The distance from each other is about 2 kilometers, the habitable ridge having a width of c. 1.5 kilometer. On the ridge a number of circular depressions occur (so-called pingo ruins) which originally were filled with peat. An ancient road, or rather a bundle of cart tracks, the Koningsweg ("King's road") runs along the ridge. It connects the village of Zeijen, 1.5 km SSE of the site of Zeijen I, with the village of Lieveren, situated 10 kilometer further to the north, on a small but in ancient times probably navigable stream, connecting the uplands with the sea marshes to the north.

The site of Zeijen II (the "camp") is situated on the SW rim of one of the circular peat bogs, the Witteveen. Immediately to the north of the bog a large complex of Celtic fields occurs (Van Giffen, 1949; Müller-Wille, 1963; Brongers, 1976;

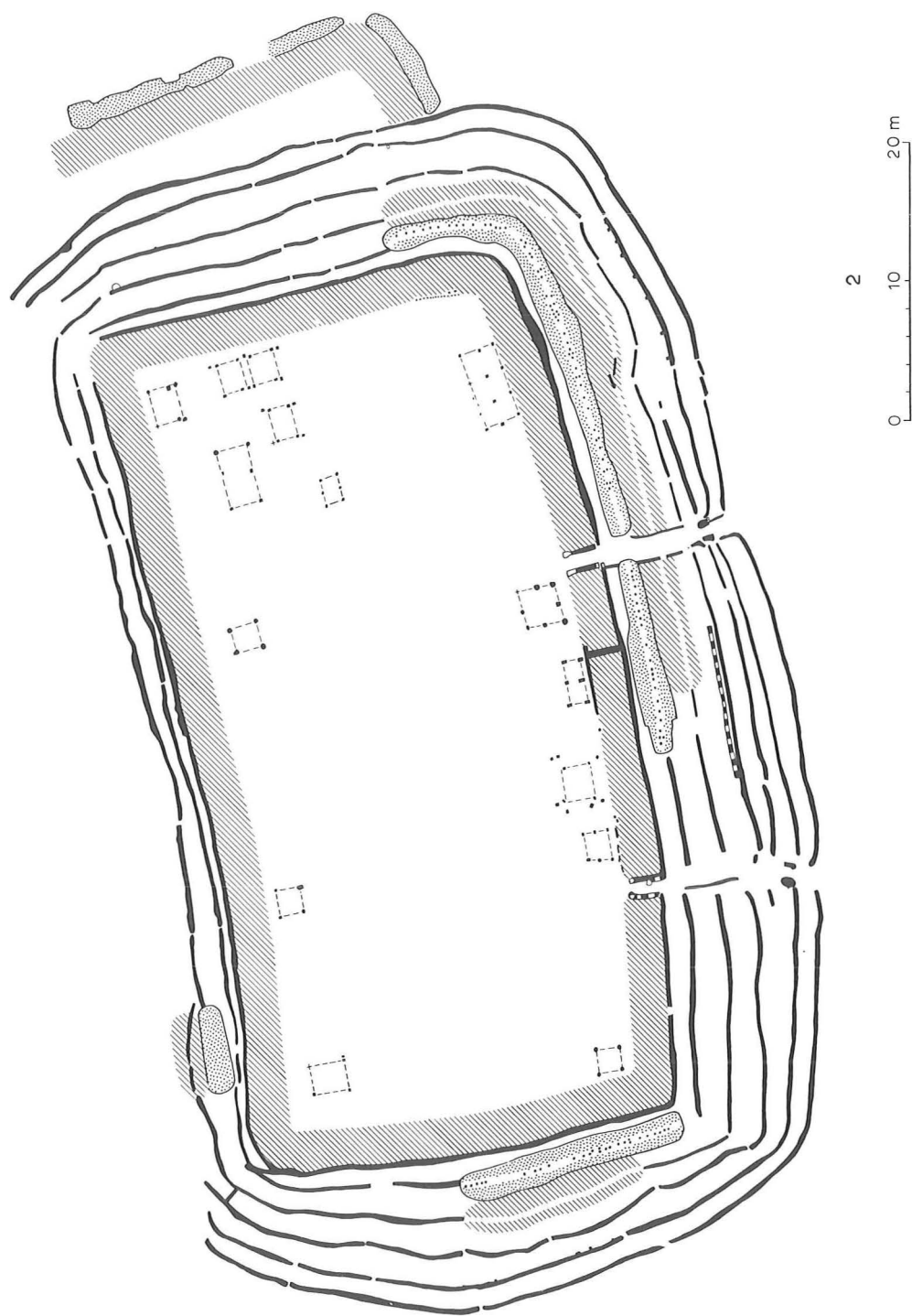
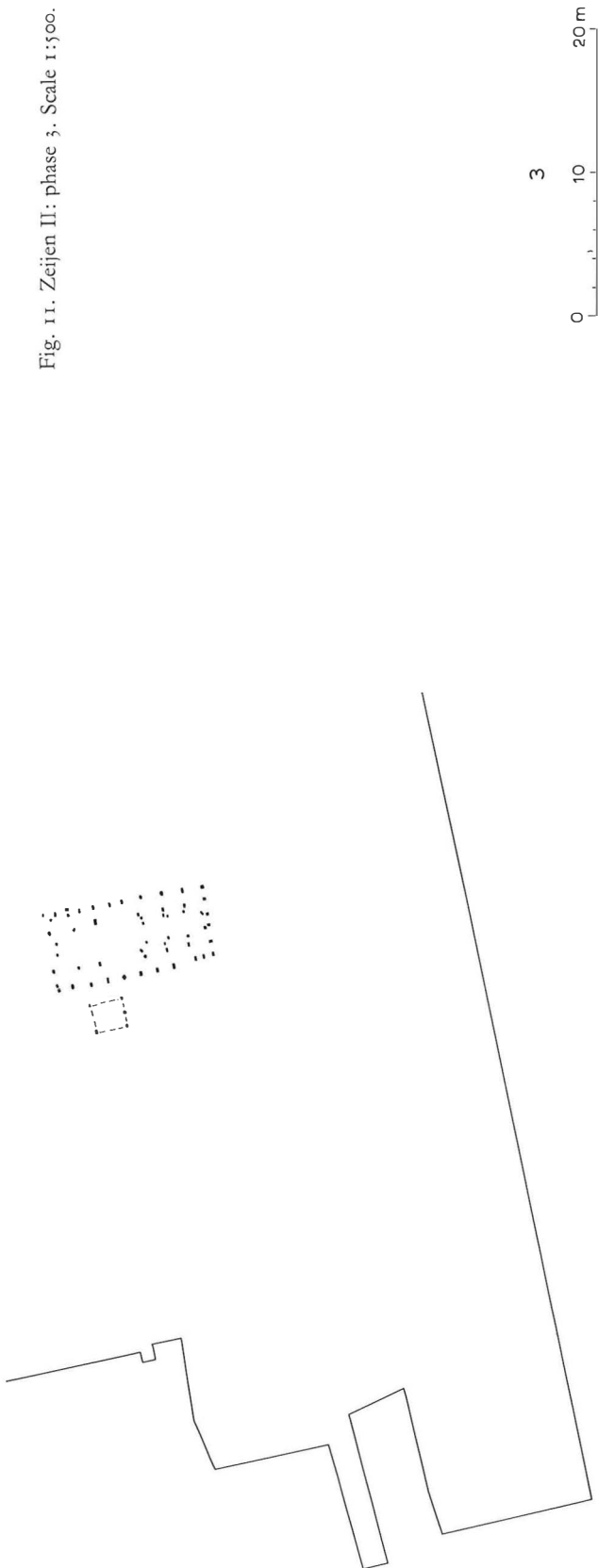


Fig. 10. Zeijen II: phase 2. Scale 1:500.

Fig. 11. Zeijen II: phase 3. Scale 1:500.



Waterbolk, 1977). While mapping the banks of the field system, Van Giffen found the "camp", the banks of which stood out in the heathland as a kind of isolated field element. The local people had told him that although the Celtic field system as a whole bears the name *heidense legerplaats* ("heathen camp"), the true "camp" should be the one on the Witteveen rim. A somewhat smaller bog, the Gelveen, was situated c. 150 m SE of the Witteveen.

In one of the banks near the Witteveen a culture layer with Iron Age pottery with RW I, RW II and RW III rims was found (fig. 73), showing that the banks were still growing in the 4th century B.C.

Neolithic and Bronze Age barrows occur all over the ridge, mostly however on the western flank of the ridge, west of the Celtic field. Two dense groups of barrows are mainly of Iron Age date. They cover pyre remains and occur in combination with square and rectangular ditches (p. 99).

On the rim of the Witteveen, in the immediate vicinity of the site of Zeijen II, four barrows of older date occur (Waterbolk, 1977). One of them (no. 117) dates from the Middle Bronze Age, the three others (nos. I-III) are multiple-period barrows with burials and building stages ranging in age from the Neolithic TRB culture to the Middle Bronze Age. All three had a sod capping showing reuse in an advanced stage of the Iron Age. A megalithic tomb is situated c. 300 m SE of Zeijen II and c. 200 m NW of Zeijen I.

Zeijen I is situated within an apparently separate Celtic field of smaller dimension, which has been discovered on aerial photographs (Brongers, 1976). A few stray finds of Funnel Beaker pottery, Corded Ware and Barbed Wire ornamented pottery, as well as some flint artifacts, testify to the presence of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age man at the site of Zeijen I.

4.1. The Zeijen II enclosure (figs. 4-13)

The general plan (fig. 8) is easy to interpret as far as the banks, palisades and ditches is concerned, but the inner part presents some difficulties. The course of the excavation, which had to be interrupted during the last months of the war, was not quite satisfactory; in the northwestern part of the area the record is particularly fragmentary.

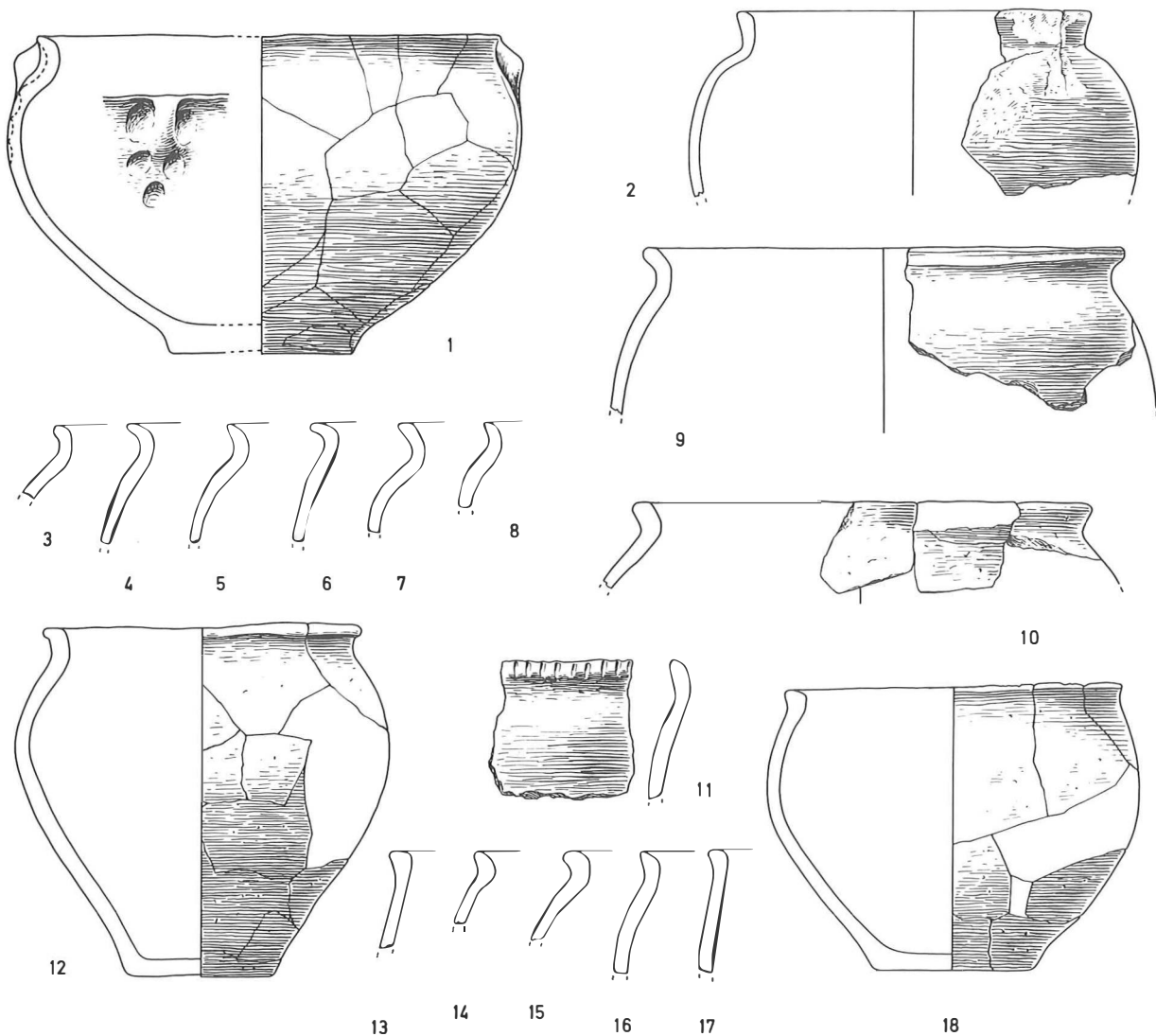
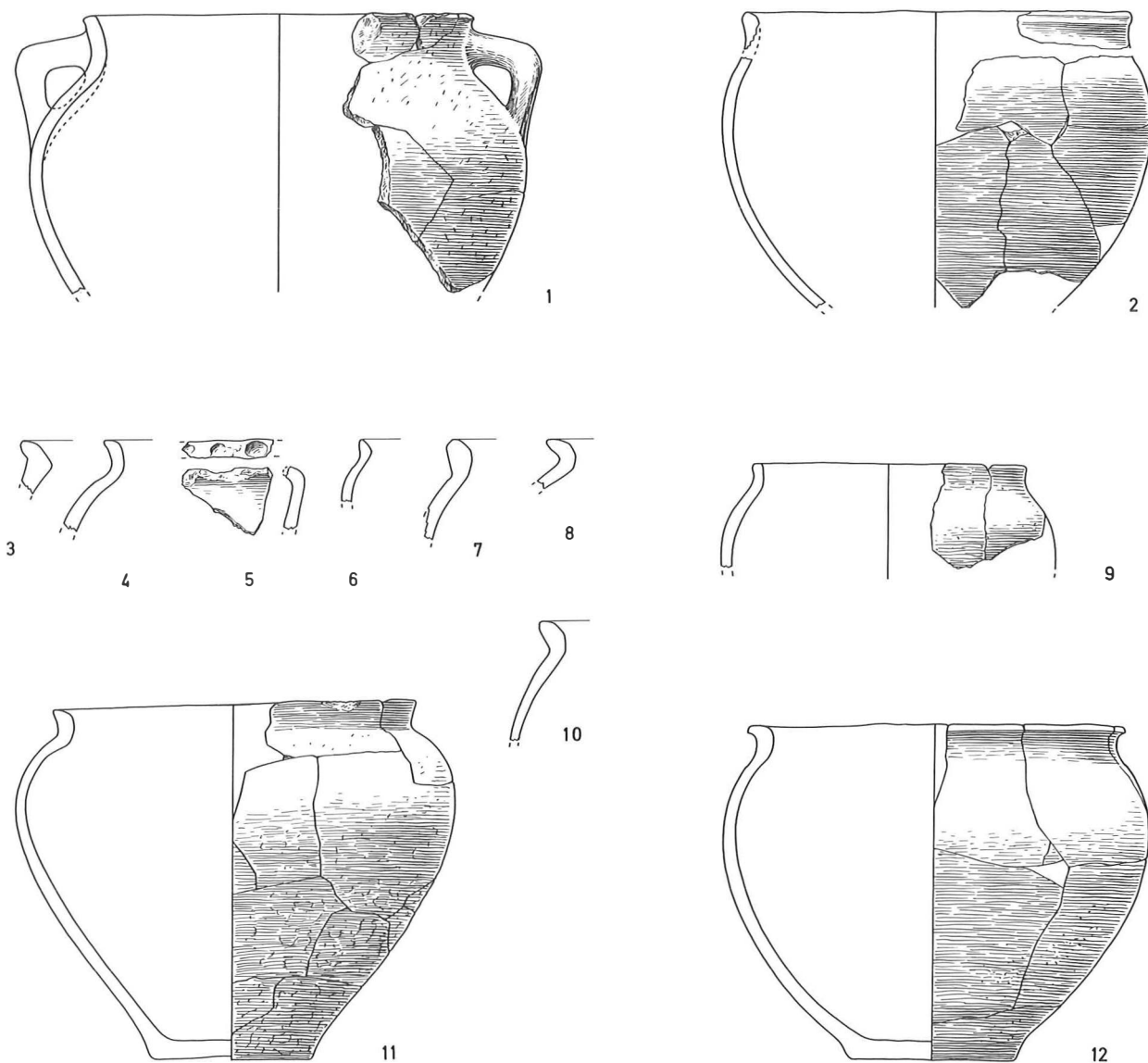


Fig. 12. Zeijen II: find complex 35 and find 49 (both from a depression in the SE corner of the enclosure. Type PP IV D: 1-11; type PP IV C: 12-18.

(1) As a first stage (fig. 9) I consider the fragment of a three-aisled long house in the center of the enclosure. The large distance between the roof-bearing pairs of posts and the fact that the wall posts, as far as preserved, are of equal number to the inner posts, suggest a Bronze Age date for this building. The group of granaries outside the enclosure has been placed on the same plan. Such groups, without apparent association with a normal house, occur fre-

quently within Celtic Fields. They probably date from the Late Bronze Age or the Iron Age. Since locally no banks seem to have developed, and no plough-soil was observed under the banks of the enclosures, a rather early date is to be preferred. The granaries could belong to the same phase of cultivation which was found under the banks of the Celtic field at the foot of tumulus 117, northwest of the Witteveen (Late Bronze Age). Here a group of granaries of much the same character was found.

(2) After a fairly long period during which the vegetation had the character of a heathland, the enclosure was built. Its defences (figs. 4-7, 10) con-



sisted of an earth wall (fig. 5) and a number of outer palisades (fig. 6). The wall, which was locally preserved to a height of 0.55 m, consisted of inverted sods. It had been built over an undisturbed soil profile.

The sod wall has an outer palisade revetment, which turns inward at both entrances. Only locally were fragments of an inner wooden revetment preserved, suggesting some type of box structure for the wall throughout.

A ditch with a depth of 1.20-1.80 meters was locally dug outside the wall. The earth from it, however, appears to have been thrown outward,

Fig. 13. Zeijen II: various pottery finds from the enclosure. 1: 1944 V 37; 2: 1946 VI 61; 3-5: 1946 VI 70; 6-9: 1944 VI 80; 10: 1944 VI 62; 11: 1946 VI 71; 12: 1946 VII 84. Type RW III: 4; type PP IV A: 7, 10; type PP IV D: 1, 2, 5, 8; type PP IV C: 11, 12.

thus forming a low bank.

Of the outer palisades the first (inner) one continues in the bottom of the ditches (except at the north side), the second continues apparently in the banks (this is demonstrated only at the north side).

At the bog side no more palisades are present, but at the other three sides three more palisades occur. Between the entrances one more palisade is



Fig. 14. Zeijen I: palisades of phase 3 and ditches of phase 2 in the SE part of the excavated area; seen from the S. Photo B.A.I. 1934.

present between the third and the fourth palisade. Locally the third palisade shows signs of repair.

Gates are present in the main wall and in the fourth (fifth) outer palisade (fig. 4). At the east side an outer wall with fragmentary ditch has been added to the structure.

Inside the bank only granaries were found; the long house which practically would block the western entrance is reckoned to the next stage.

Pottery finds from the site are generally scarce. Only in the south-eastern corner of the enclosure, just inside the wall, a fairly large quantity of sherds was found in some shallow depressions (perhaps only top-soil, covered by the collapsed wall). Van Giffen considered the sherd concentration as remains of a fire-place. Most of the pottery belongs

to the Paddepoel types IV D (fig. 12:1-11) and IV C (fig. 12:12-18). Two shallow pits in or near granaries yielded each a complete vessel (fig. 13:11, 12). The rest of the pottery consists of stray sherds from post-holes or the fillings of the ditches. It equally belongs mainly to the types PP IV D and C. Some, however, may be earlier (*e.g.* a RW III sherd from a pit in the NW corner of the enclosure). Some rims belong to the PP IV A type. The *streeppand* ornament is absent, but this may be due to the over-all scarcity of finds. In one of the ditches a rotary quern of basalt-lava was found.

On the basis of these finds a building date in the last decades before our era seems probable.

(3) The house (fig. 11) cannot be dated directly, for lack of directly associated pottery finds of diagnostic value. Of course, some of the stray finds of fig. 13 may belong to this stage. The general type, as well as the distance of the upright pairs in the stable part, suggests a date in the centuries around



Fig. 15. Zeijen I: house 19 and palisade in the NW corner of the enclosure (phase 3), from the NW. Photo B.A.I. 1934.

the beginning of our era. For that matter it could belong to the period of use of the enclosure. But since it blocks an entrance, it would more likely be earlier or later than the enclosure. It fills an otherwise empty place. I assume that it was built in the second half of the 1st century A.D., shortly after the enclosure lost its original function.

There is no evidence for later occupation at the site. Apparently it was deserted and became heathland or shrub. The raised bog formation in the Witteveen continued; it overgrew the bank and ditch at the north side and the lower parts of the enclosed area. To the north of the Witteveen the bog overgrew the lower parts of the Celtic field as well.

Our interpretation of the site differs from that of Van Giffen only in respect of the house plans. We

do not accept as such the post configuration in the SE corner, but have, instead, isolated a plan which Van Giffen did not recognize, and which we consider as preceding the enclosure. Van Giffen considers the house in the SW part of the enclosure as being contemporary with it; as stated before we would rather see it as later.

4.2. The Zeijen I enclosures (figs. 14-30)

The site of Zeijen I was excavated by Van Giffen as early as 1934 (Van Giffen, 1936b). In fact, it was the first large-scale settlement excavation in Drenthe, and, together with the site of Diphooen (Van Giffen, 1936a), excavated in the same year, the first to yield house plans comparable to the three-aisled buildings which had been unearthed in the terp of Ezinge a few years before. The site was discovered in 1933 when after ploughing of the heathland the square ditch showed up by its dark fill.



Fig. 16. Zeijen I: SE entrance gate (phase 3), seen from the SW.
Photo B.A.I. 1934.

The reinterpretation of this site has already been published elsewhere (Waterbolk, 1976); I shall restrict myself here to the main points. The photographs of the excavation (figs. 14-17) show that the conditions for observation of post-holes and fences were not optimal. This is probably due to a period of forest or shrub cover following the human occupation and preceding the heathland. A few hundred meters southwards even at present an ancient woodland occurs, the Zeijer Strubben ("Zeijen shrubs"). It means that a relatively thick layer of earth had to be removed before the soil traces showed clearly. This explains the fragmentary character of many of the building plans (fig. 18).

(1) A house and a granary, as well as two ring-ditches and a cremation pit, precede the enclosures and together probably belong to the Early Iron Age Zeijen culture (fig. 19). The house, though fragmentary, has a counterpart at Rhee (see below p. 118). It should be seen in the context of the Celtic field. Wherever excavated Celtic fields contain house-plans and groups of granaries. Particularly good evidence in this respect has been produced at the site of Hijken (Harsema, 1974). The rudimentary cemetery may be somewhat older than the house. A fragment of a flint sickle probably dates from the same stage. In my earlier report on the site, it was erroneously stated that find complex no. 10 consisted of pottery of RW I type; in fact it is of Early Bronze Age date.

(2) After a period of a few centuries, a small, nearly square enclosure was built (fig. 20). The



Fig. 17. Zeijen I: house 26 (phase 4), seen from the NE. Photo B.A.I. 1934.

original existence of a wall is deduced from the presence of a ditch, from the course of the palisade trenches and the nature of the entrance gate at the NE side. It was probably a box rampart, built from wood and earth, the latter being taken from the shallow outer ditches. These ditches were interrupted at two corners and cannot, therefore, have been an integral part of the defence. The northwestern inner palisade shows signs of repair. At the SE side the outer palisade is lacking.

The orientation of the walls follows the main lines of the Celtic field system. The only structures which can with some probability be attributed to the enclosure are a number of granaries, placed, as

at Zeijen II, mainly along the walls. The area enclosed by the wall has a size of 0.14 ha.

The ditch filling is rich in pottery (find numbers 13-19, 21, 23-29, 32-33). These finds give a *terminus ante quem* for the building of the enclosure, but since the ditches had no defensive function, the pottery may in part date from the time the small enclosure was in use. Another part may date from the time the second enclosure (phase 3) was in use.

The majority of the pottery is of the RW III (fig. 24) and RW IV (fig. 25) types. PP IV C (fig. 26:1-7) and D (fig. 26:8-14) do occur frequently. Pottery of type IV A is very rare (fig. 28:1-6); it may belong to the last period of use of the enclosure (phase 3b) or to phase 4 (see below).

The *streepband* ornament is quite common. The characteristic, geometrical ornament which frequently occurs on *terp* pottery of the RW III type,

and which only once has been found in the hinterland (on a pot from Rhee, see fig. 67), is lacking. The possibility cannot, however, be excluded that the pottery illustrated on fig. 24 in part precedes the pottery illustrated on figs. 25 and 26. If so, the building of the enclosure might go back to the 3rd century B.C.

(3) The small enclosure was succeeded by a larger one with an enclosed area of 0.38 ha. Two phases (3a and 3b) can be distinguished on the base of the course of the outer palisade (figs. 21, 22). In phase 3b the NE entrance was given up, and the SW entrance was widened so as to give access for wheeled vehicles. An outer palisade was added on the NE side opposite the wide entrance. Just as in the first enclosure the NW and SE gates remain open, suggesting the main direction of the traffic.

Although the wall itself is not preserved, its former presence is strongly suggested by the parallel course of two palisades and the nature of the entrance gates. In phase 3a the outer face of the rampart was built from a densely spaced palisade in a trench. The inner face of the rampart wall consisted over large distance of lines of medium-sized post-holes spaced at intervals of a meter or more. Horizontal beams or planks must have connected them, for otherwise the earth in the wall could not have been kept in position. Thus in this case, too, the wall must have been of the box type. The earth may partly have consisted of material from the wall of the first enclosure, partly of sods taken in the neighbourhood.

In phase 3b the outer face of the wall was completely renewed. Locally it was now made of widely spaced posts, both with and without foundation trenches. The inner wall, too, shows signs of repair. It was, however, not possible to separate a 3a from a 3b stage. Six long rectangular buildings as well as, though with less probability, a number of granaries were placed inside the enclosure. The long buildings were all set along the wall. With one exception (house 9) they avoid the place of the former wall and ditch.

It is doubtful whether all buildings coexisted. Perhaps at first 19 and 12 (+ 11?) were erected in the corners of the enclosure. The place of the entrance of building 20 suggests that building 19 had already disappeared when 20 was built. Equally 13 might be younger than 12. Building 9 could also be

late, for it was built on the place of the old wall. Provisionally one might therefore attribute buildings 19, 12 and 11 to phase 3a and buildings 13, 20 and 9 to phase 3b.

Nothing can be said with certainty with regard to the periodisation of the granaries. Of course, some of the granaries within the first enclosure (2) might just as well be attributed to phase 3.

The plans of the buildings, though clearly three-aisled, differ in many respects from all other Iron Age house-plans excavated in the area: there is no evidence for a functional subdivision in a living and a stable part of about equal length. There are no entrances in the long sides, no large intervals in the line of inner upright-pairs. The walls, as far as preserved, consist of a thin palisade only; true wall posts being present only with house 13. The spacing of the inner upright pairs of most houses (exception only 20) would be compatible with a function as a stable, but there are no indications for stall boxes. I assume that the buildings were no ordinary houses with a living and a stable part, but storage barns and perhaps stables. House 19 seems to have a transverse wall perhaps serving to separate a room for a guard or herdsman.

Find numbers which with some probability can be brought in relation to phase 3 are 8, 9, 22, 30 (in the foundation trench of phase 3b), 11 and 12 (in pits with a central position in buildings 12 and 11 respectively). The total number of sherds is small. The type composition – see for example find complex no. 11 (fig. 27) from house 12 – does not differ from that in the ditch of phase 2, in which the pottery, as we stated before, may partly be contemporary with phase 3. Thus, pottery does not allow us to detect a difference in age between phases 2 and 3. A date in the late second or early first century B.C. seems probable.

(4) After a period during which the walls and palisades disintegrated, the site was reoccupied (fig. 23). We find a palisade fence with two normal long houses, an out-house and a few granaries. One of the houses (no. 26) is provided with ditches parallel to three of the walls. The pottery finds from these ditches (nos. 4-6) (fig. 28:7-12 and fig. 29) clearly belong in majority to type PP IV A (50 B.C.–A.D. 50). A few stray finds from the ditch of phase 2 equally belong to this type (fig. 28:1-6). Find no. 4, however, looks earlier (fig. 28:9-12). Sherd fig.

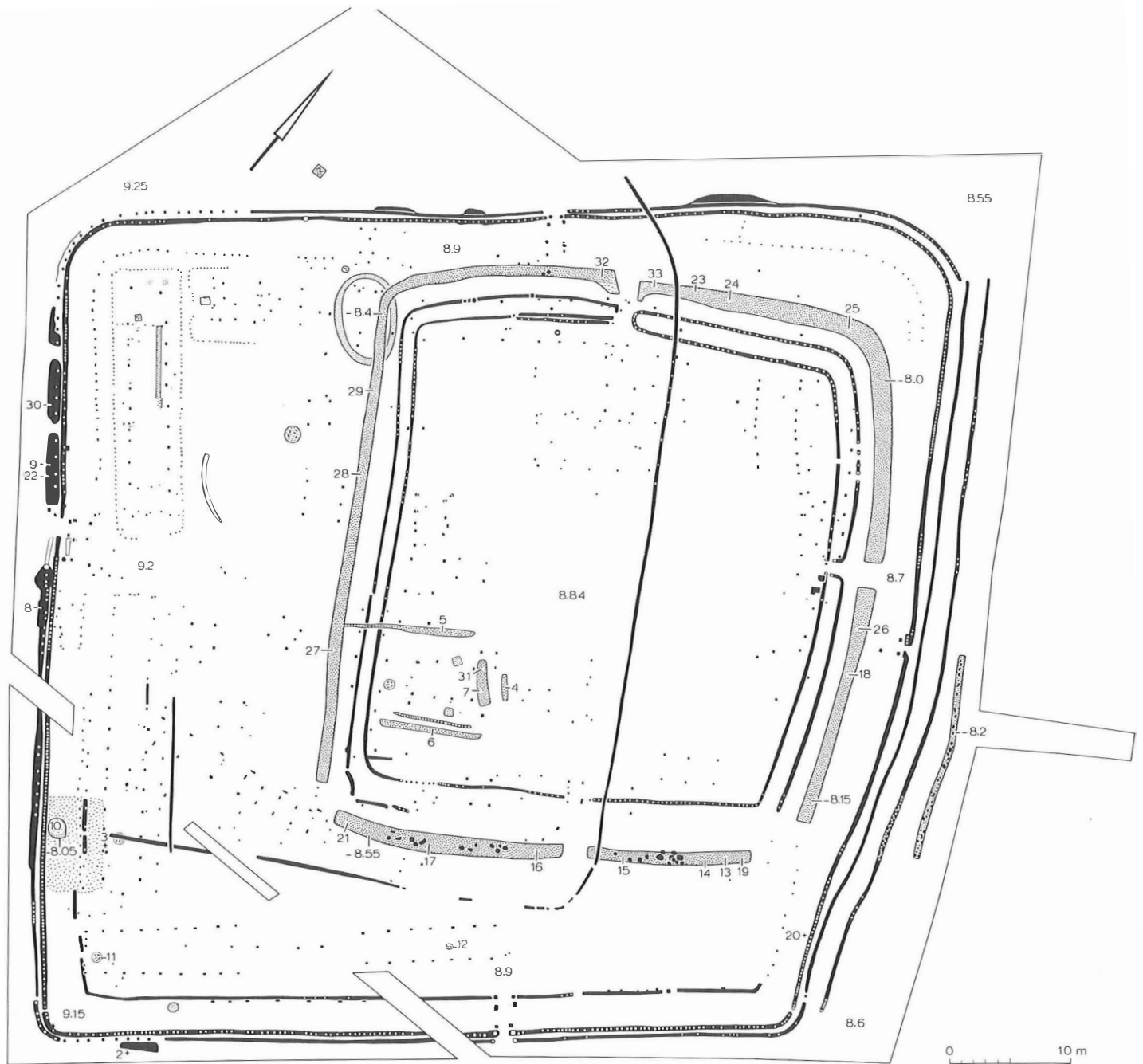


Fig. 18. Zeijen I: general plan. Scale 1:500.

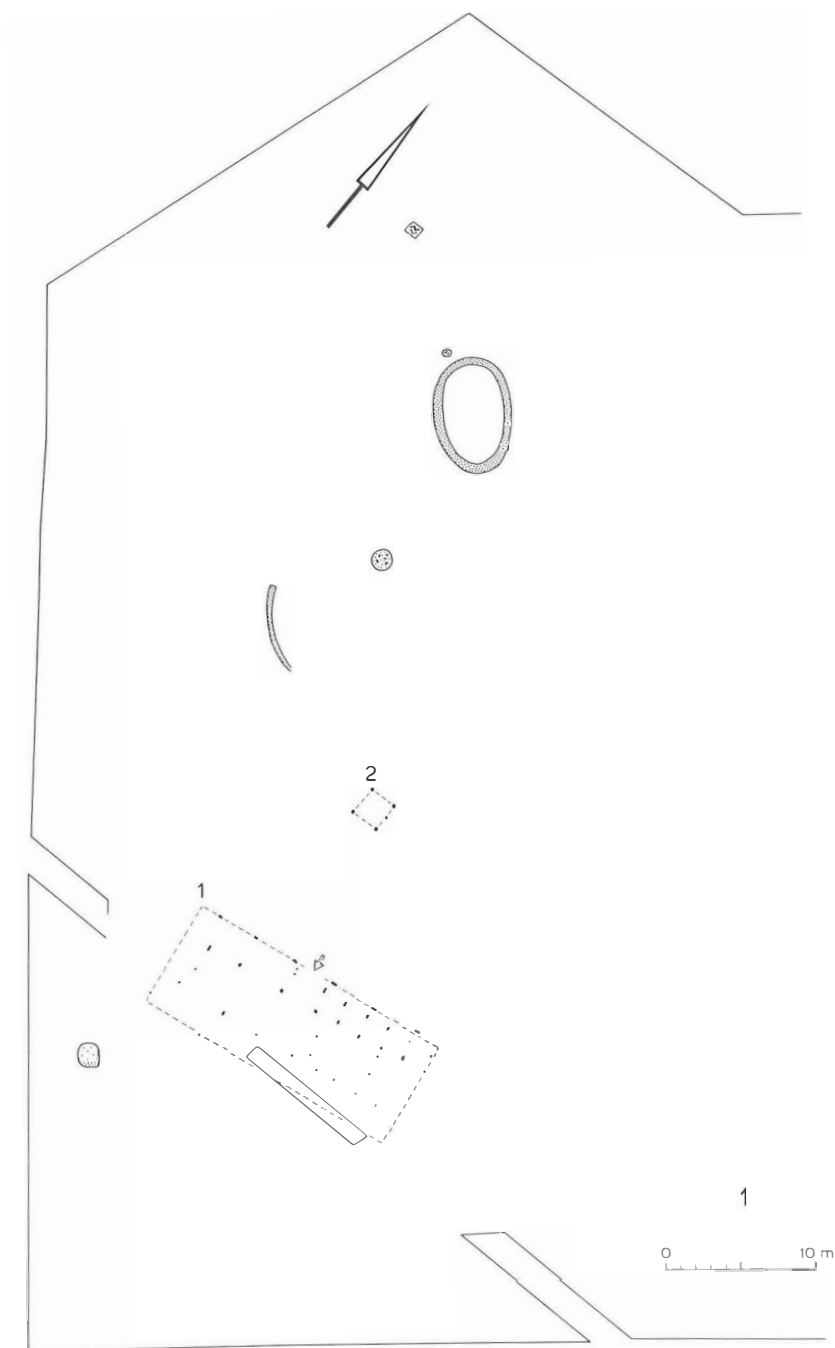


Fig. 19. Zeijen I: phase 1 (N.B.: the pit SE of house 1 is of Early Bronze Age date). Scale 1:500.

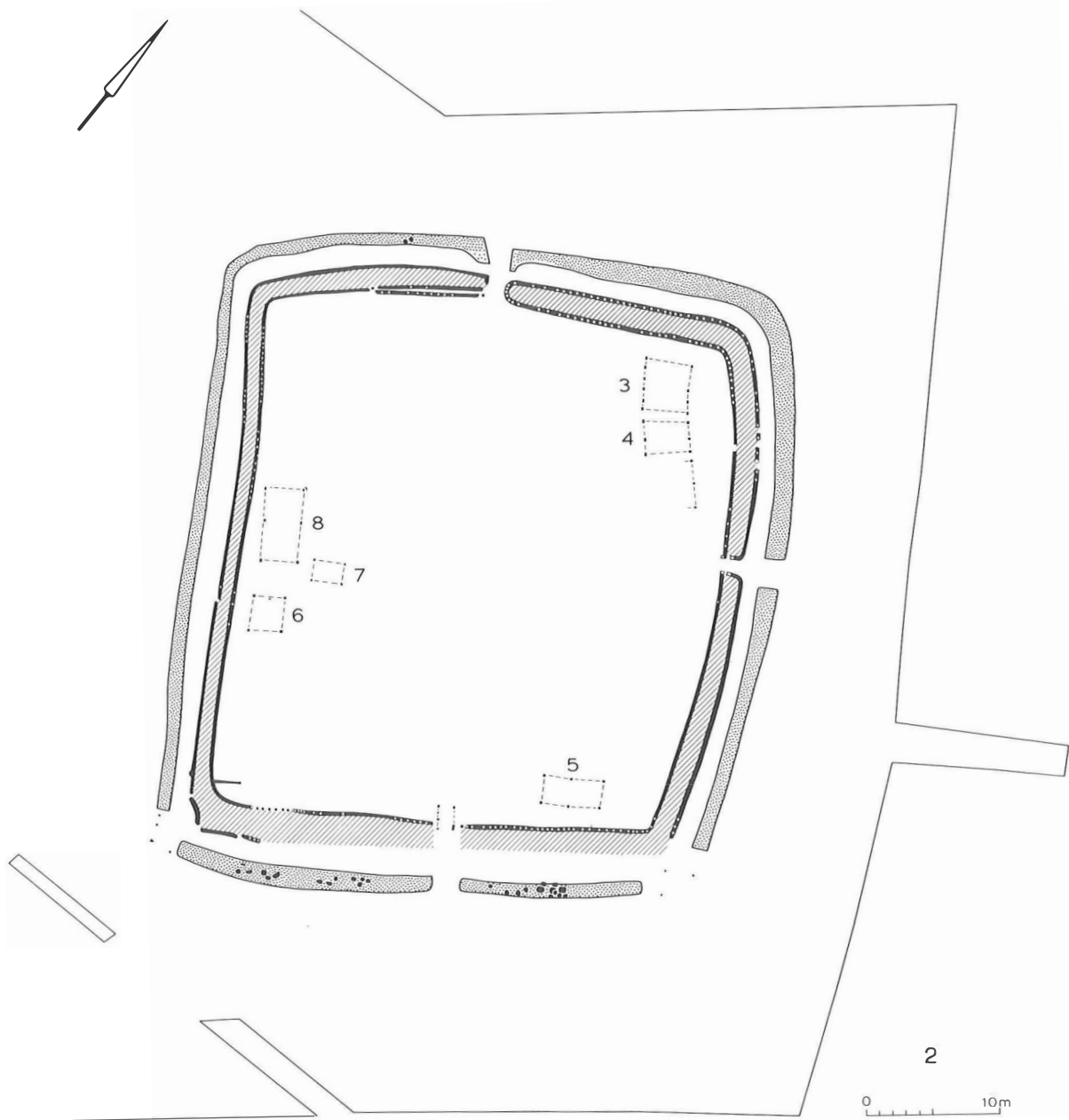


Fig. 20. Zeijen I: phase 2. Scale 1:500.

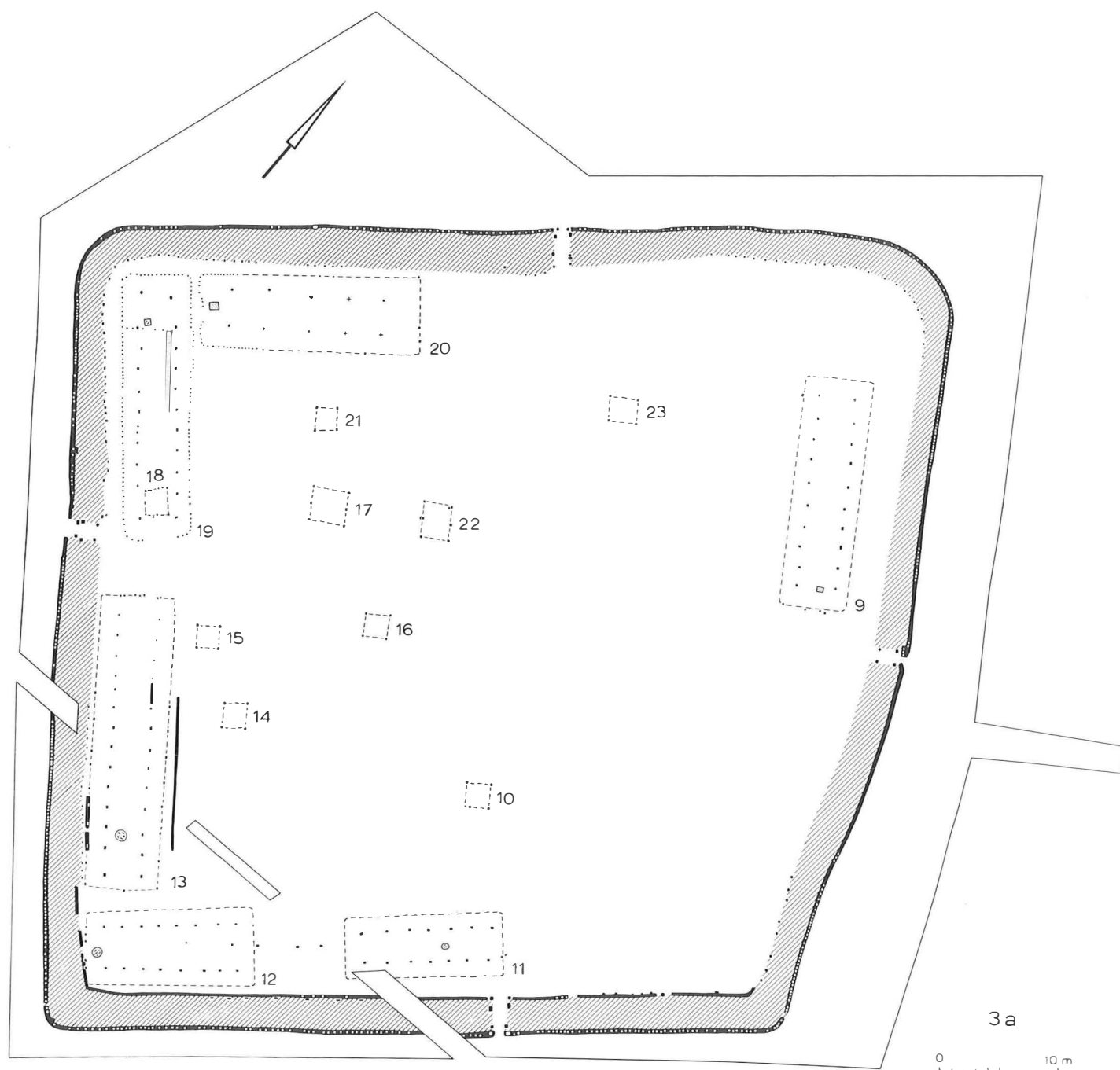


Fig. 21. Zeijen I: phase 3a (N.B.: house 20, 13 and 9 probably belong to phase 3b). Scale 1:500.

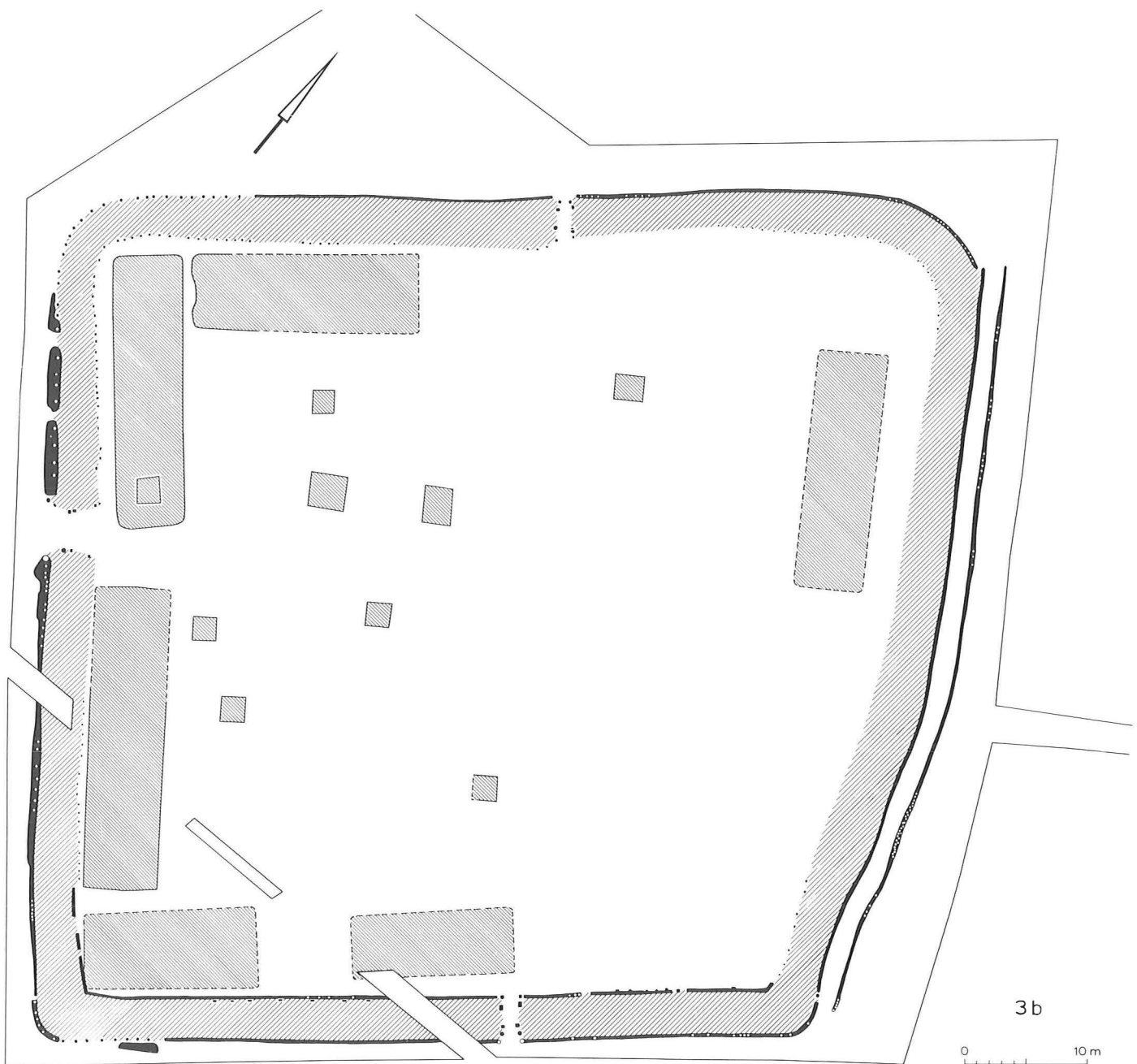
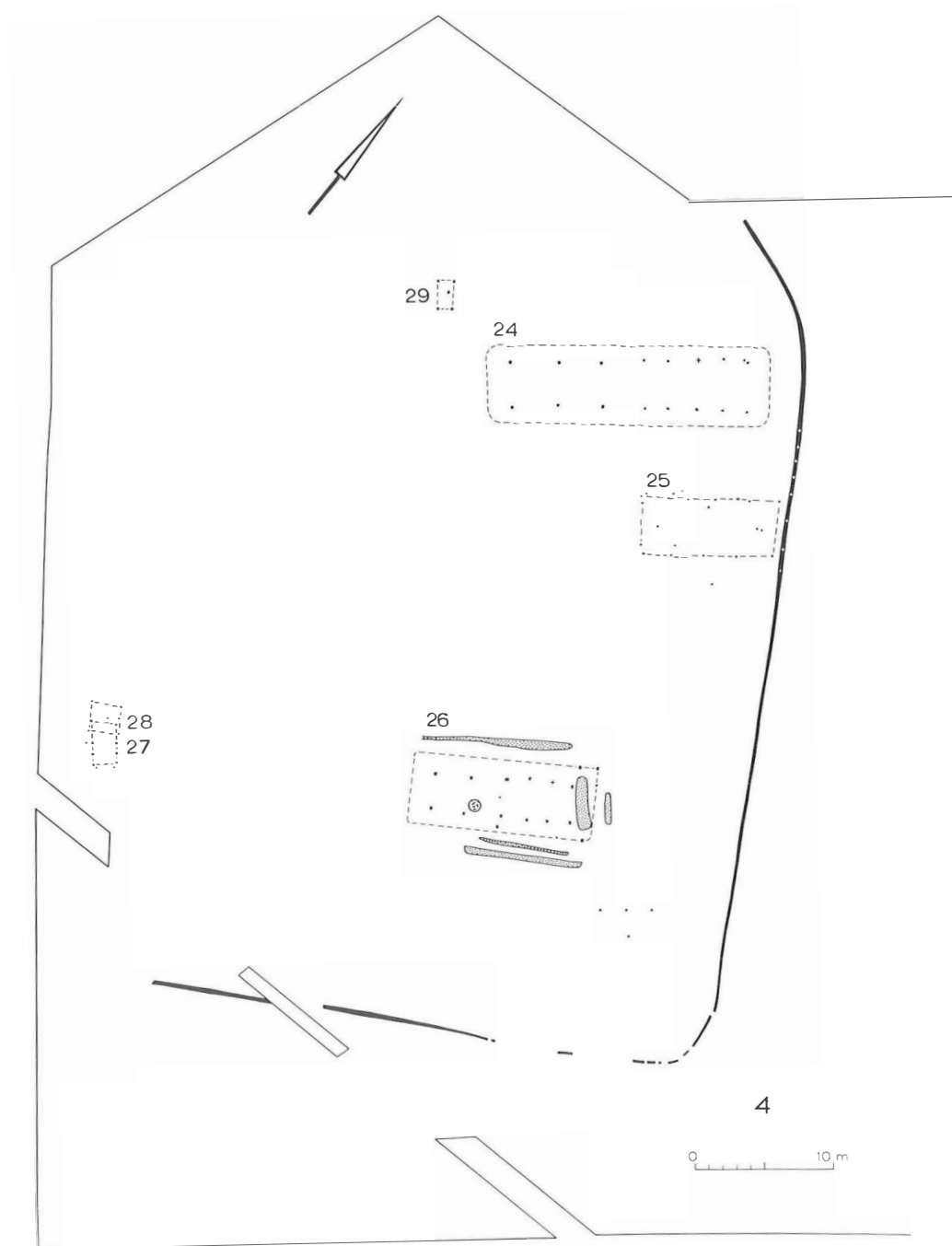


Fig. 22. Zeijen I: phase 3b (N.B.: only the outer palisades and entrances differ from those in phase 3a; for the houses see fig. 21). Scale 1:500.



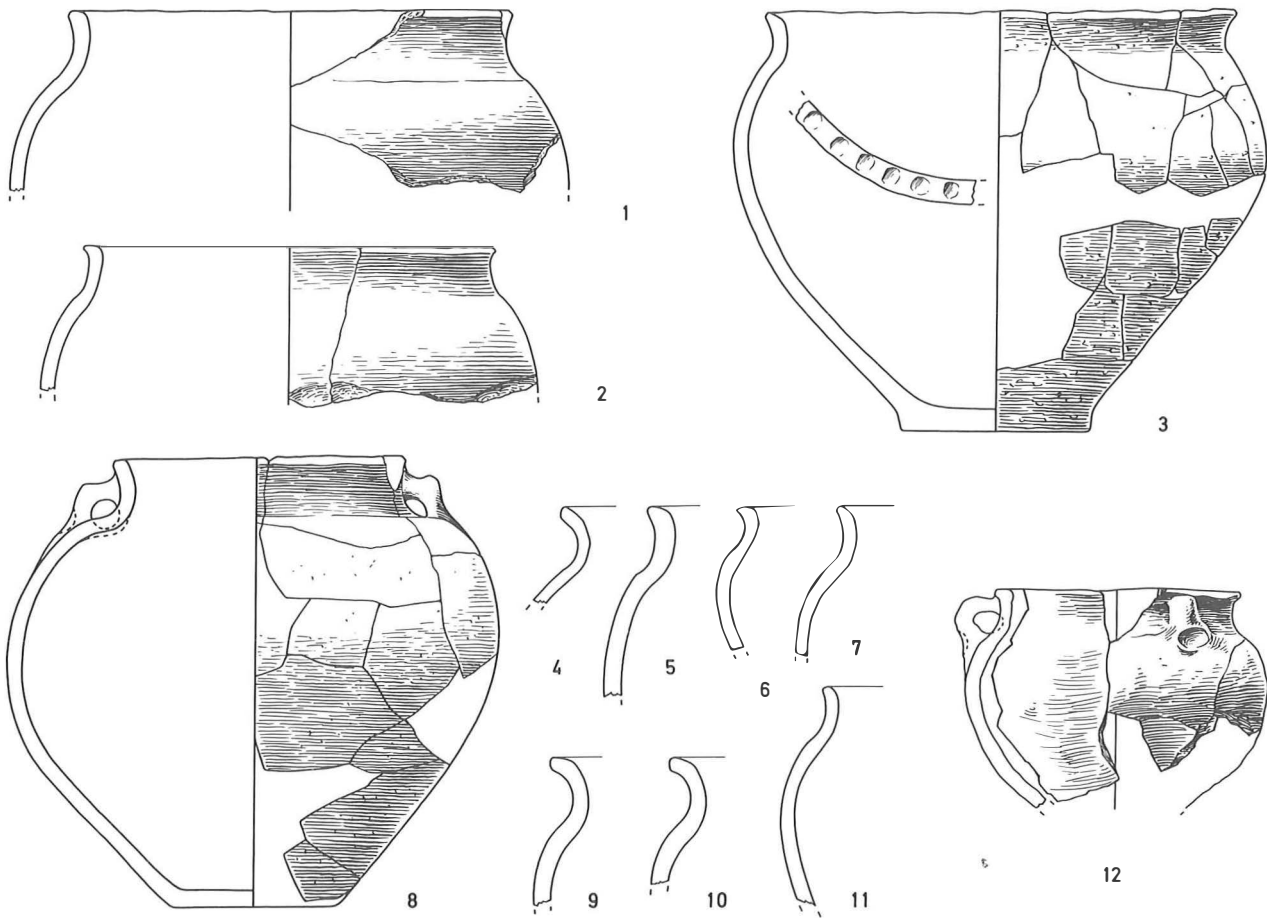


Fig. 24. Zeijen I: pottery of RW III type from the ditch of phase 2. 1, 6: 1934 VII 29; 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12: 1934 VII 15; 2, 4: 1934 VII 32; 9: 1934 VII 27.

Fig. 25. Zeijen I: pottery of RW IV type from the ditch of phase 2. 1, 2, 4, 8, 11: 1934 VII 15; 3: 1934 VII 29; 5, 10: 1934 VII 26; 6: 1934 VII 17; 7, 9: unnumbered; 12: 1934 VII 27.

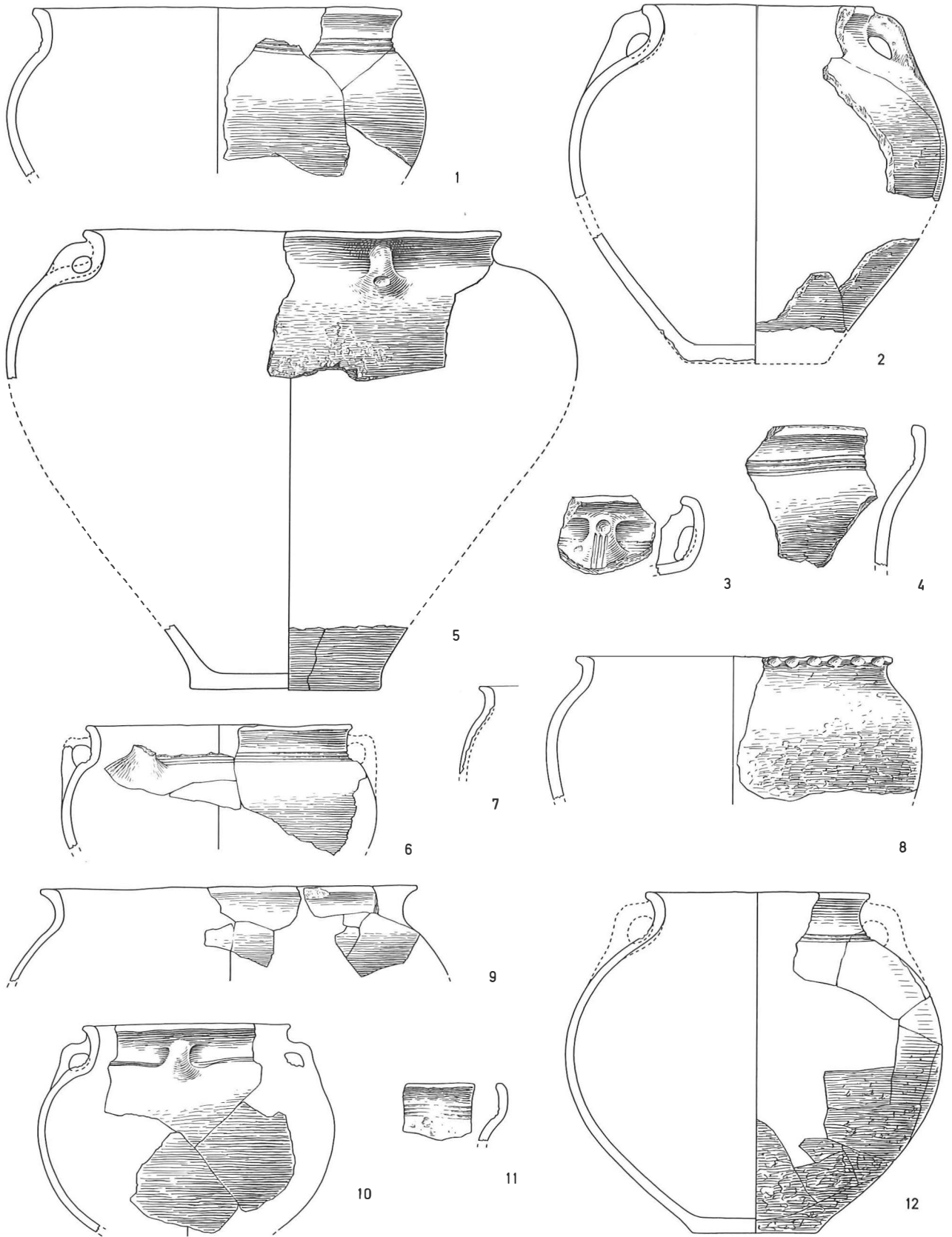


Fig. 25.

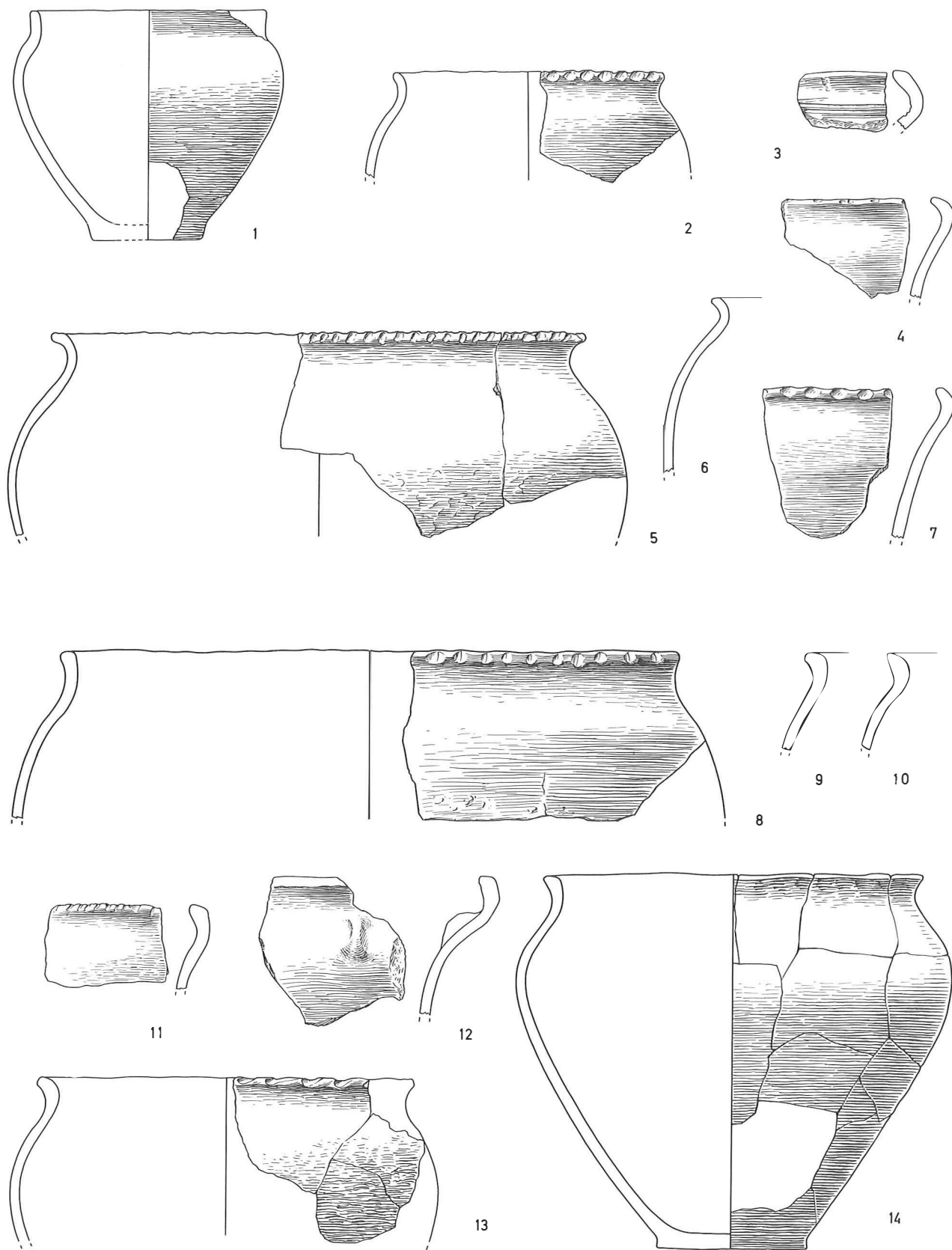


Fig. 26.

Fig. 26. Zeijen I: pottery of PP IV C (nrs. 1-7) and PP IV D (nrs. 8-14) types from the ditch of phase 2. 1, 8, 14: 1934 VII 15; 2, 5, 12: 1934 VII 27; 3, 10, 13: unnumbered; 4: 1934 VII 33; 6, 7: 1934 VII 7; 9: 1934 VII 29; 11: 1934 VII 25.

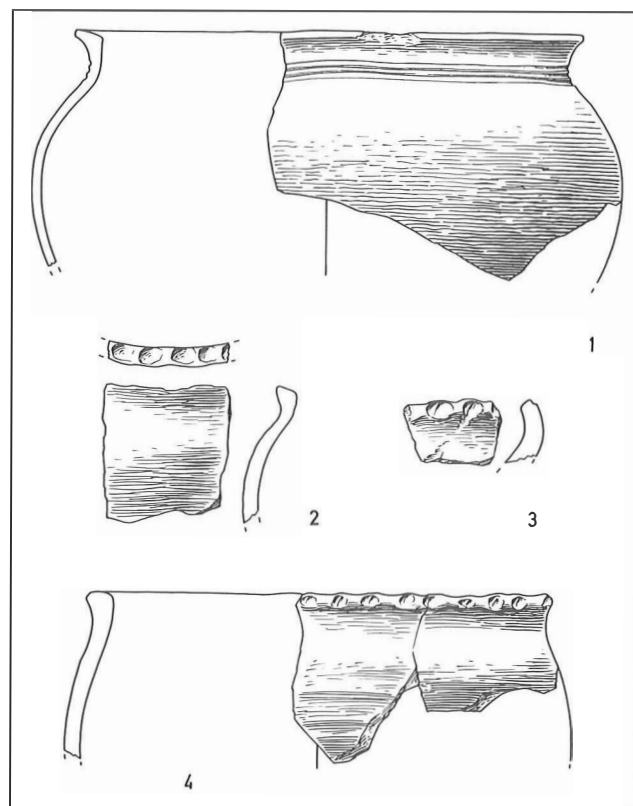
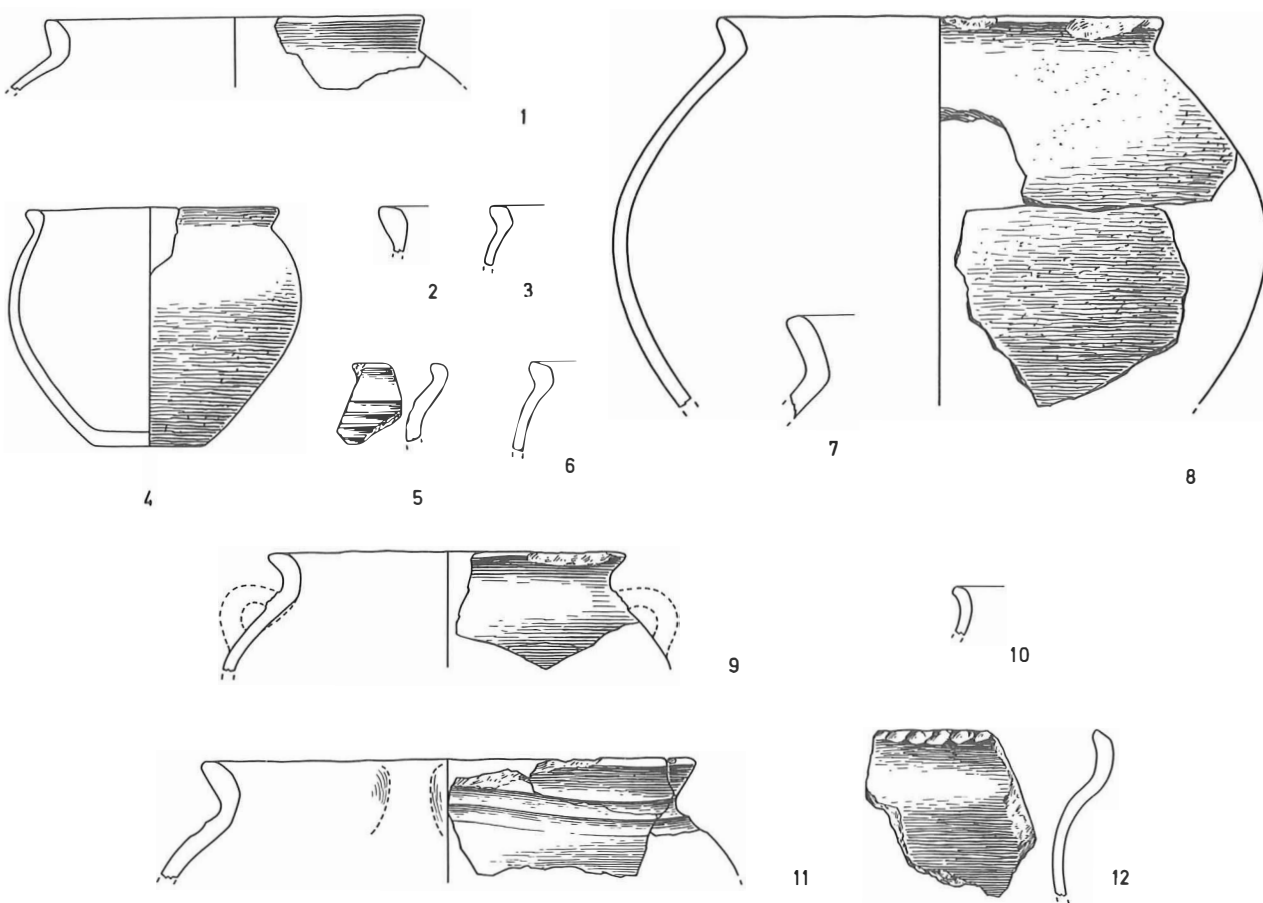


Fig. 27. Zeijen I: find complex 11 in pit in house 12 (phase 3a).

Fig. 28. Zeijen I: pottery of PP IV A type from the ditch of phase 2 (nrs. 1-6) and find numbers 51 (nrs. 7-8) and 4 (nrs. 9-12) from ditches of house 26. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6: 1934 VII 15; 4: 1934 VII 23; 7-8: 1934 VII 5; 9-12: 1934 VII 4.



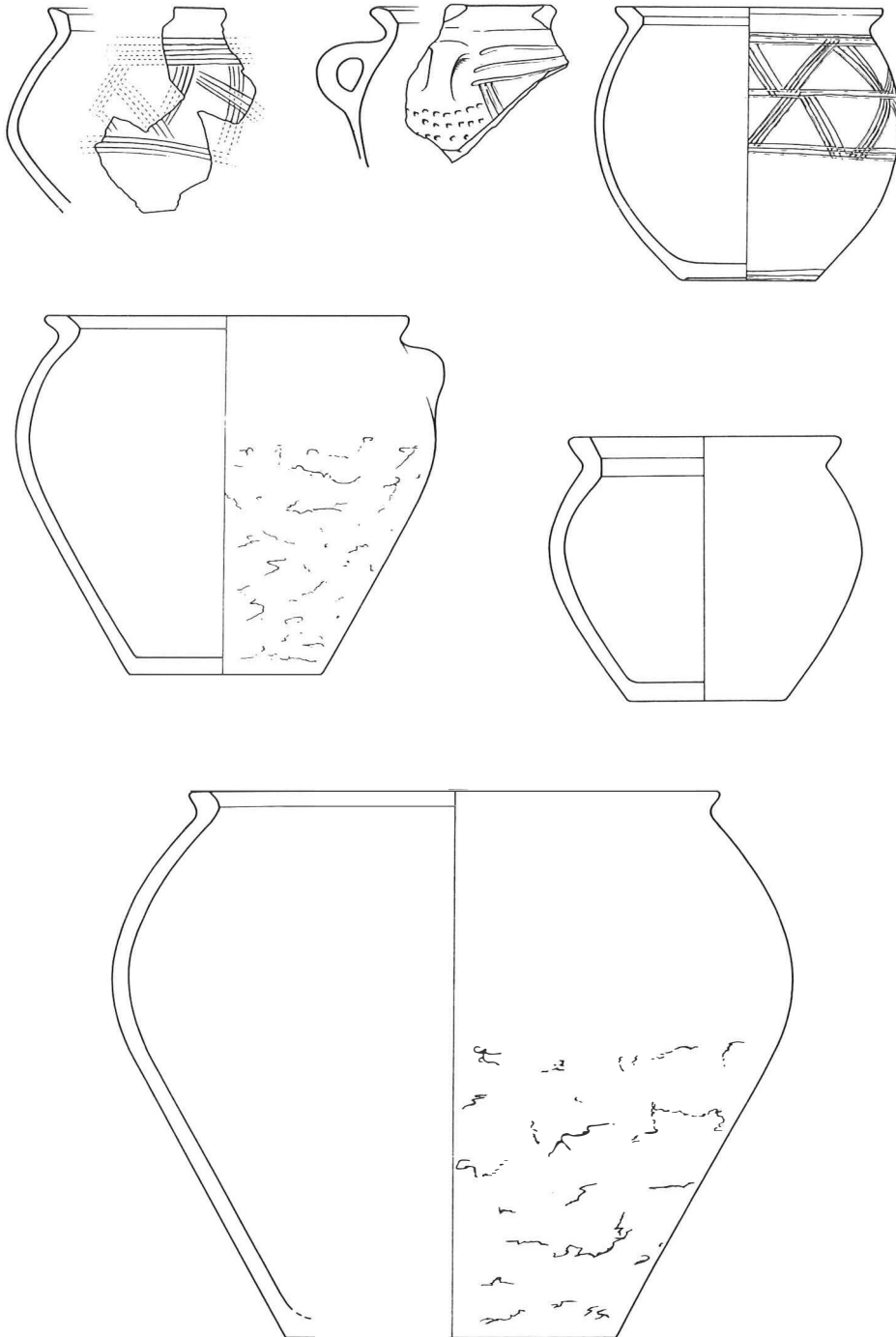


Fig. 29. Zeijen I: find complex 1934 VII 6 from ditch of house 26 (after Van Es, 1968, p. 318).

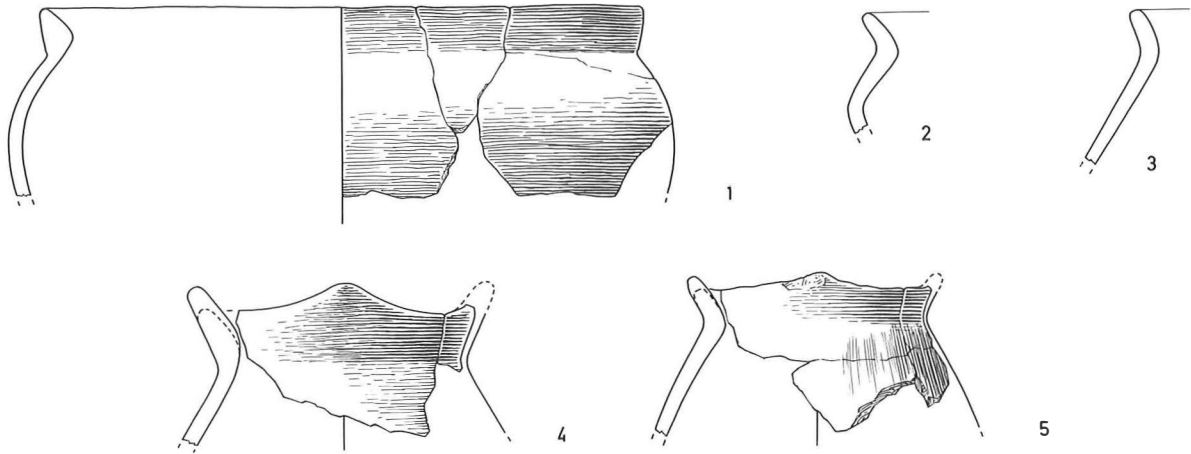


Fig. 30. Zeijen I: find complex 1934 VII 13 from ditch of phase 3, but apparently representing a later intrusion (type W II B).

28:11 shows a variety of the *streefband* ornament, which is not uncommon in the *terpen* area. A rotary quern was also found (nr. 31).

The date of these find complexes is a *terminus ante quem* for the enclosures 2 and 3, which confirms the date for them expressed above. The Zeijen II enclosure dating from the first century A.D. may be contemporary with the house of phase 4 at Zeijen I. In view of their close proximity, Zeijen II is probably the functional successor of Zeijen I.

House 24 is reckoned to this phase, because it would lie just in front of the NW entrance if it should belong to the preceding phase (3). The out-house 25, which on the base of its position could well belong to the first enclosure (phase 2), is reckoned to phase 4, because most other buildings in the enclosures are placed along the walls.

(5) The fence of phase 4 was observed to be cut by a fragment of a foundation trench parallel to the SE wall of house 13. On fig. 21 we neglected this observation and reckoned the trench to this house.

However, some few pottery finds suggest an occupation of the area in the second century A.D. Find number 13 in the ditch of phase 2 contains a few good examples of the Wijster II B 2 type (fig. 30). It may well be that the area served as a cultivated field in the 2nd century A.D. before it was finally given up and became heathland. This would

explain why the walls did not remain intact, such as was the case with the Zeijen II camp. In this connection, it is of interest to note that at the site of Zeijen II too there is evidence for a later occupation (phase 3). Afterwards the whole area was apparently given up. Perhaps the settlement was moved to the site of the present village, where finds from the Roman period have indeed been made.

Van Giffen has published only a short report on the site (Van Giffen, 1936^b). A large report planned for the Proceedings of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Amsterdam has never appeared.

In his discussion of the site, Van Giffen distinguishes five stages. He did not recognize house 1, which we consider to be the first to be built on the site. To him, the larger enclosure (our phase 3) is the first of the two. We definitely prefer to see it as following the small enclosure (phase 2). The main argument is that the large enclosure shows a deviation from the square form which can only be understood as the result of an effort to avoid the ditch and bank of the small enclosure. His third phase is our house 26 (phase 4), the parallel ditches of which are considered to be the remnants of an enclosure of only 0.01 ha size. The palisade which we also attributed to this phase would, according to Van Giffen, represent a fourth phase. A fragment of a palisade trench, cutting through this palisade phase, would be evidence for a fifth phase.

In his well-known reconstruction of the large enclosure he includes building 24. We assume that it was later, because of its situation in front of an entrance.

5. THE VRIES ENCLOSURES (figs. 31-44)

The prehistoric settlement was discovered below a thick layer of arable soil (*Plaggenboden*) on the ancient field complex (*es*) of the village of Vries, at a distance of only 250 m from its present center.

Village and *es* are situated on a low NNW-SSE ridge parallel to the ridge of Zeijen, and bordered in much the same way by upper courses of brook valleys.

Three big tumuli of unknown age lie at a distance of only 400 m WSW of the site. A few hundred meters further SW is a group of Iron Age tumuli, two of which have been excavated (Van Giffen, 1941b). One of them was situated on old arable soil. About 1 km northwest of the site three Bronze Age barrows have been excavated (Van Giffen, 1941a).

No Celtic fields have been identified in the area, but since some pits containing Early Iron Age sherds were found at the excavated site, the fields presumably were situated on the same place as the *es*. Of course, the accumulation of *plaggen* earth since the Medieval period would have made a Celtic field invisible on air photographs.

The Medieval cultivation, the activity of moles and the many stones in the sub-soil made conditions for observation less favourable than *e.g.* at Zeijen II. On the other hand, parallel palisades were already found in the first trench and the excavation was thus done in full awareness of the fact that we had probably to do with a counterpart of this site. A glance at the plan (fig. 35) shows the fragmentary character of many trenches. It is evident, however, that prehistoric man, too, was bothered by the local conditions (stones), for the trenches are much less regular than at Zeijen.

The site was excavated in 1957 and published by Van Es (1958).

(1) A few pits contained RW I pottery, which occurred also as stray finds (indicated by a + sign on fig. 36). Two groups of posts, which because of their position could hardly belong to the enclosure, are also reckoned to phase 1. One or two stray sherds (fig. 39) belong to the RW II type.

(2) It is evident that the enclosure of the Zeijen II type is preceded by an earlier stage, of which a fragmentary ditch is the most conspicuous feature on the plan. There is, however, a palisade running

parallel with it, and, for example at the NW entrance of the later enclosure, it is clear that it cannot belong to that stage, for it shows no interruptions. This observation forms the key for the analysis represented in figs. 37 and 38. The wall of the first enclosure is supposed to have been situated inside the foundation trench.

At the north side a short line of posts suggests an inner revetment. At the Zeijen I (phase 2) enclosure with which the structure appears to bear some resemblance there is 1.5 to 2 m space between the ditch and the outer wall face. At Vries the space of 2 m between palisade and ditch would not leave enough room for both a wall and an interspace.

The combination of the fragmentary ditch with the parallel palisade is in itself the main argument for the assumption of a wall. Following the course of ditch and palisade, it is clear that there has been an entrance on the north side, and that there cannot have been one on the opposite side. Looking for possible entrances on both of the other sides, two places, just opposite each other suggest themselves. For the eastern one some posts add support, the western one could perhaps shift over a short distance, but that would not effect its being opposite the eastern one. Of course, this brings this phase close to Zeijen I phase 2, which also had three entrances. The line connecting the opposite entrances points in the direction of the three aligned tumuli of unknown age mentioned above. The NNE-SWW direction is the one still prevailing in the parcelling of present roads and fields in the village.

The finds in the ditch, which was filled in when the wall and palisades of the next enclosure were built, consisted of pot sherds (figs. 40-41) of exactly the same types (RW III, RW IV, PP IV C, PP IV D) as occurred in the ditches of Zeijen I (phase 2), suggesting the same general date (2nd-1st century B.C.). We assume a building date in the early 2nd century B.C.

Fig. 31. Vries: northern one of the two western passages, seen from the SW. Photo B.A.I. 1957.

Fig. 32. Vries: two temple-like structures and a granary in the center of the enclosure, seen from the E. Photo B.A.I. 1957.

Fig. 33. Vries: palisades in the SE corner of the enclosure, seen from the NW. Photo B.A.I. 1957.

Fig. 34. Vries: palisades and ditch in the SE corner of the enclosure, seen from the NE. Photo B.A.I. 1957.



Fig. 31



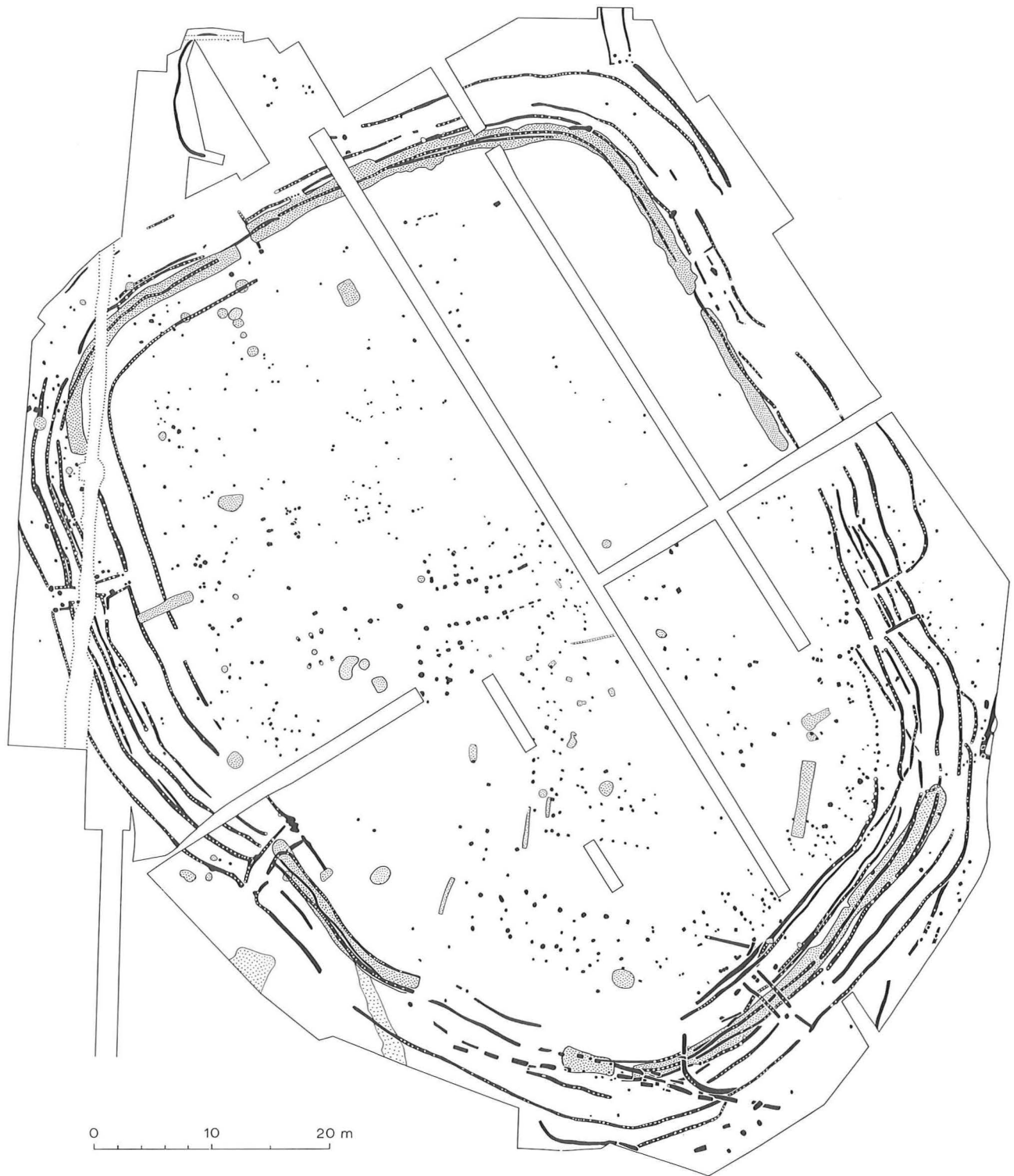
Fig. 32



Fig. 33



Fig. 34



132 Fig. 35. Vries: general plan. Scale 1:500.

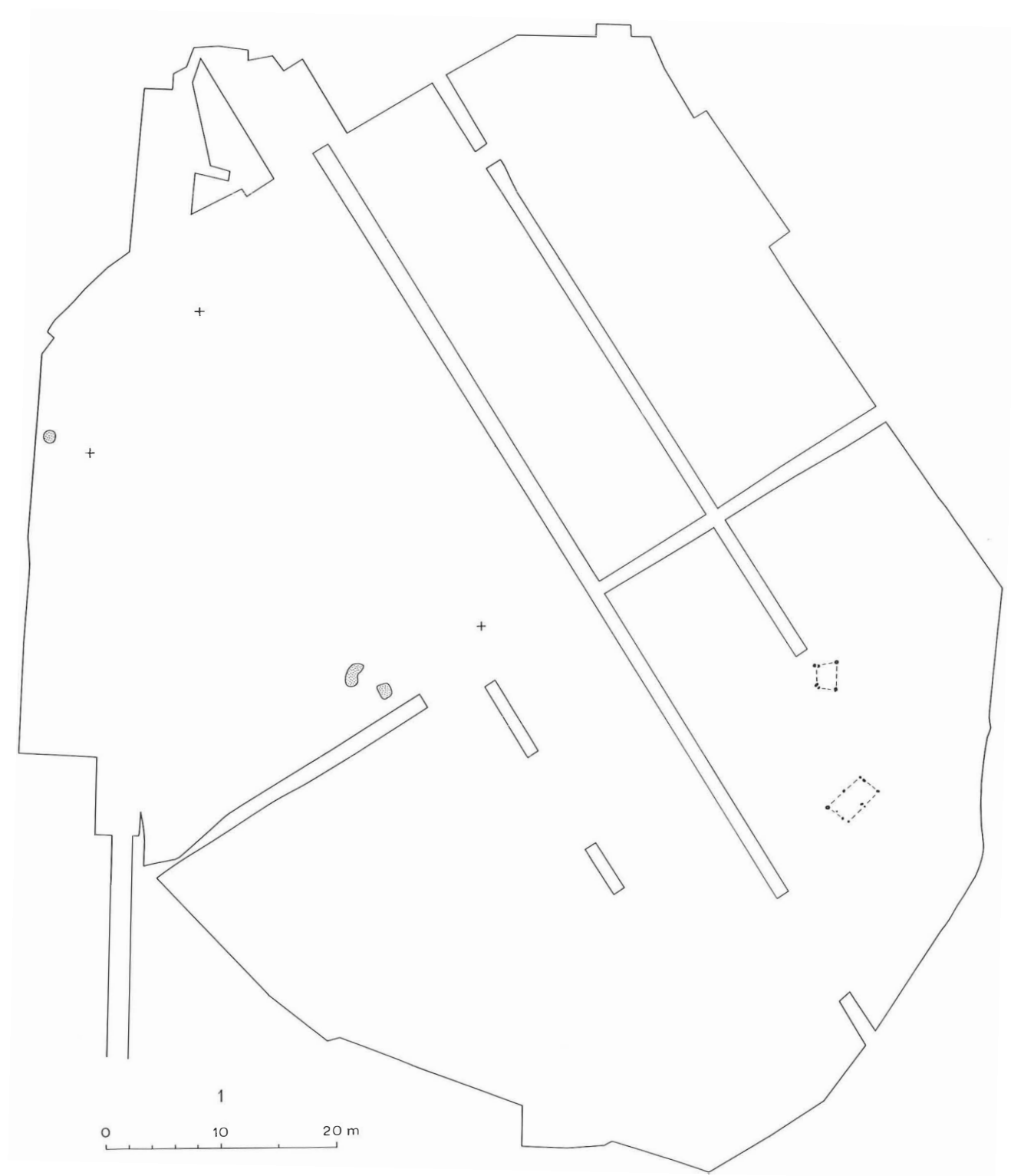
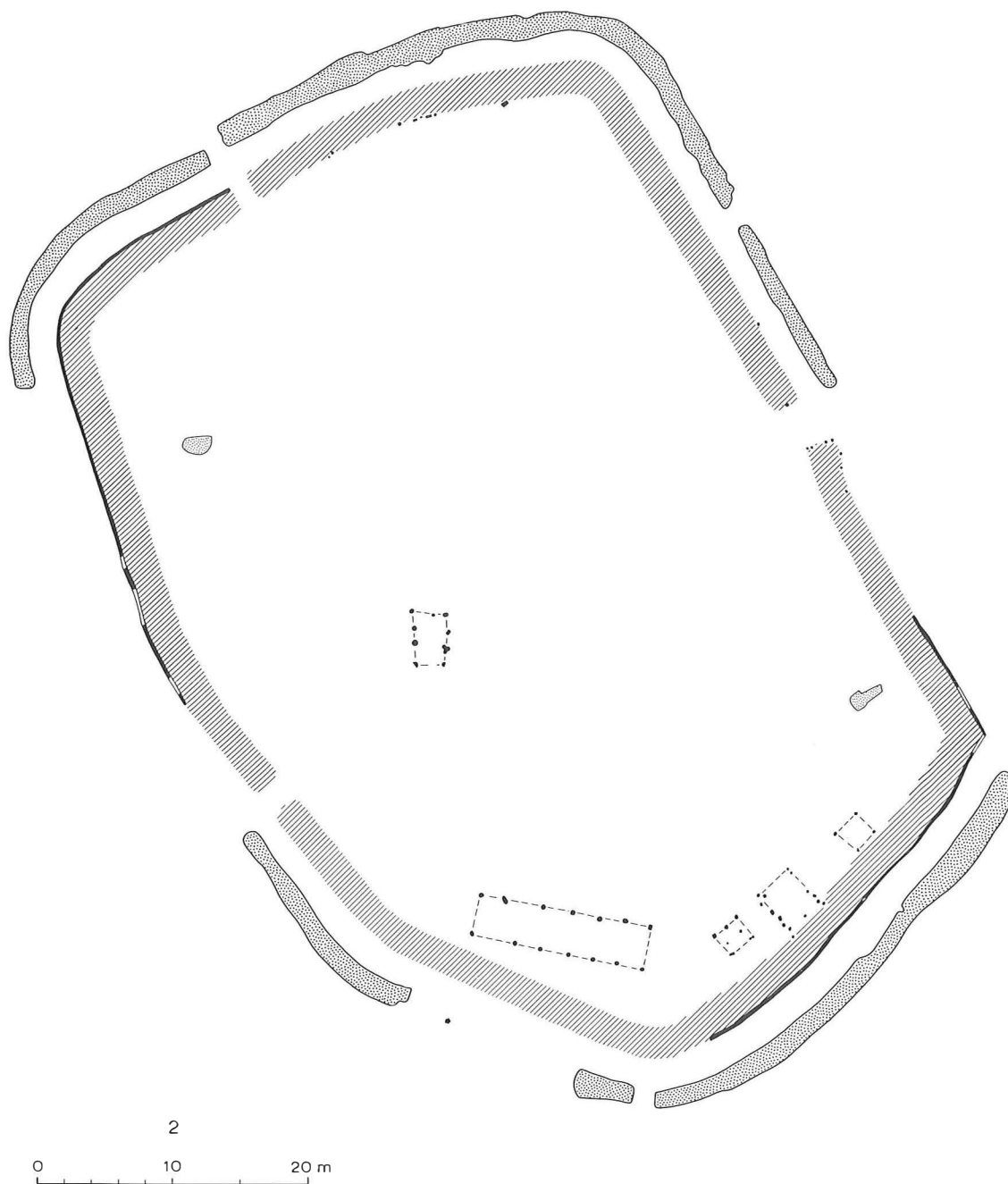


Fig. 36. Vries: phase 1. Scale 1:500.



134 Fig. 37. Vries: phase 2. Scale 1:500.

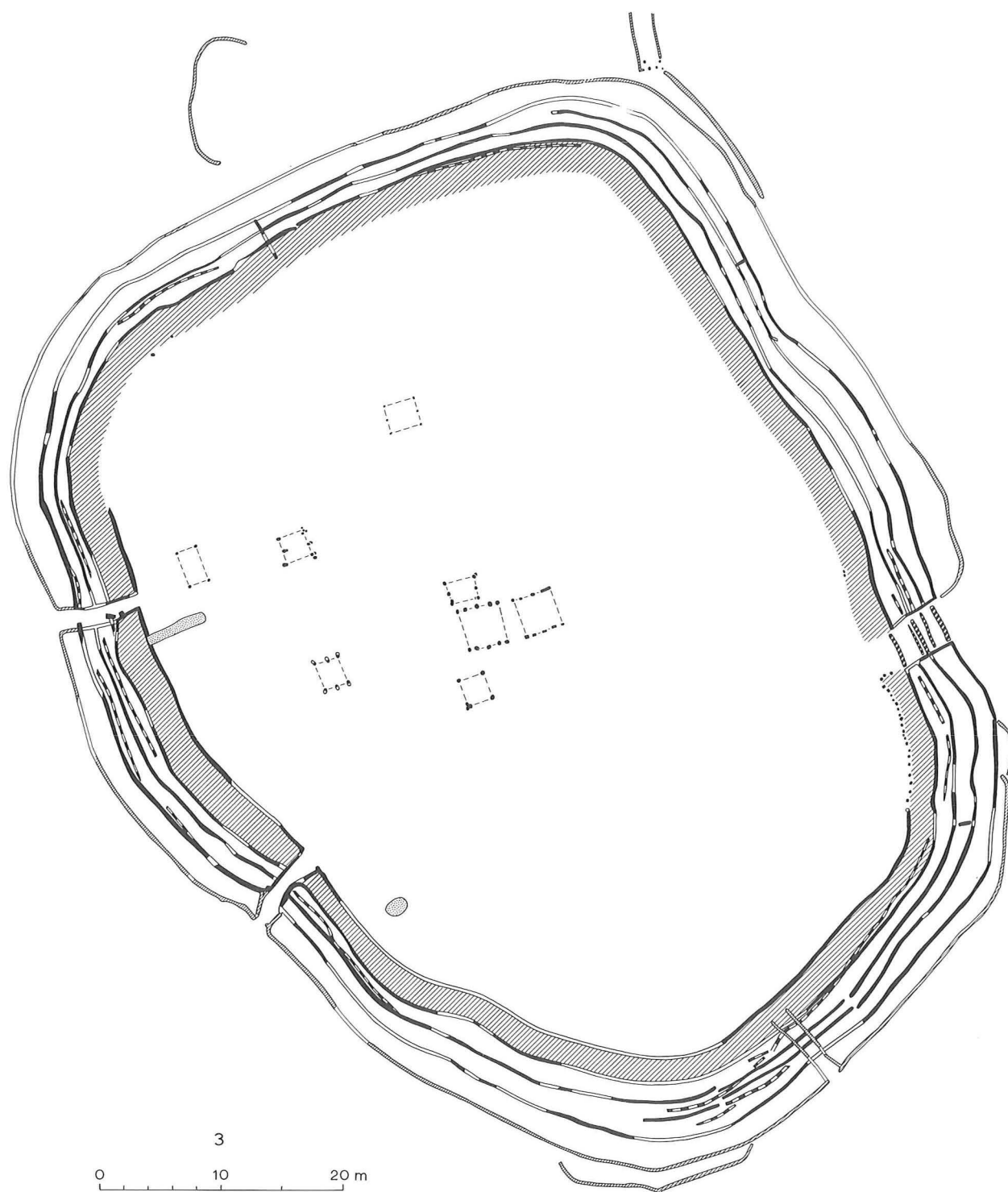


Fig. 38. Vries: phase 3. Scale 1:500.

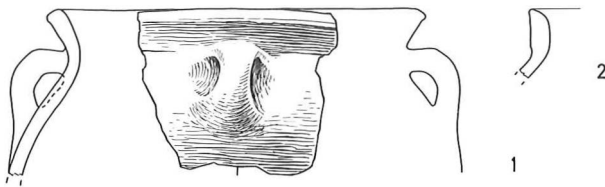


Fig. 39. Vries: sherds of RW II type. 1: 1957 VIII 16; 2: 1957 VIII 25.

As to the buildings to be attributed to this phase nothing can be said with certainty and a rather arbitrary choice had to be made: a row of granaries close to the SE wall, a central one, which cannot be contemporary with another, probably later one, and the large structure – apparently not a normal house – in the S. part, which deviates in orientation from the remaining structures (attributed to the next phase).

(3) Although the many palisades and the two entrances at the W side (fig. 38) are a convincing parallel to the Zeijen II enclosure, the detailed analysis of the Vries trenches is difficult because of the fragmentary character, the irregular course, and the many repairs and additions.

The only local evidence for a wall is the relatively wide distance between the two inner palisade lines and, strange though it may seem, the fact that the inner one is missing over large stretches, just as was the case at Zeijen I, phase 3.

The wall thus postulated appears for the most part to have been built immediately outside the earlier wall. Only in the SE corner is there a slight overlap. At the W side, the distance is locally increasing to two meters. Most probably the material from the earlier wall has been reused.

As far as the outer palisades are concerned, it seems that there were originally two at the N and W sides, and three at the E and S sides (phase 3a). An outer one was added later on, as appears from the situation at the SE side, where it is connected with a new entrance (phase 3b).

The two narrow entrances at the W side (one runs approximately at the same place as in the preceding phase) remained open throughout the use of the enclosure. There are vague indications for a temporary passage at the opposite side.

As has been stated before, the only reason to attribute the seven buildings to one phase is their

parallel orientation. Two of them are situated in the center; they consist of two rows of five posts each. With both of them the outer posts are placed on shorter distances than the inner ones. This suggests some kind of overhanging roof. In a final paragraph we shall come back to these unusual structures and suggest a possible function as temples.

At the E side, a wide entrance (suggested already in the preceding phase, a little to the north) was closed at a relatively late date, for it seems that it still was functioning when the outer palisade was added. Of course, the closing may only have been temporary (phase 3c).

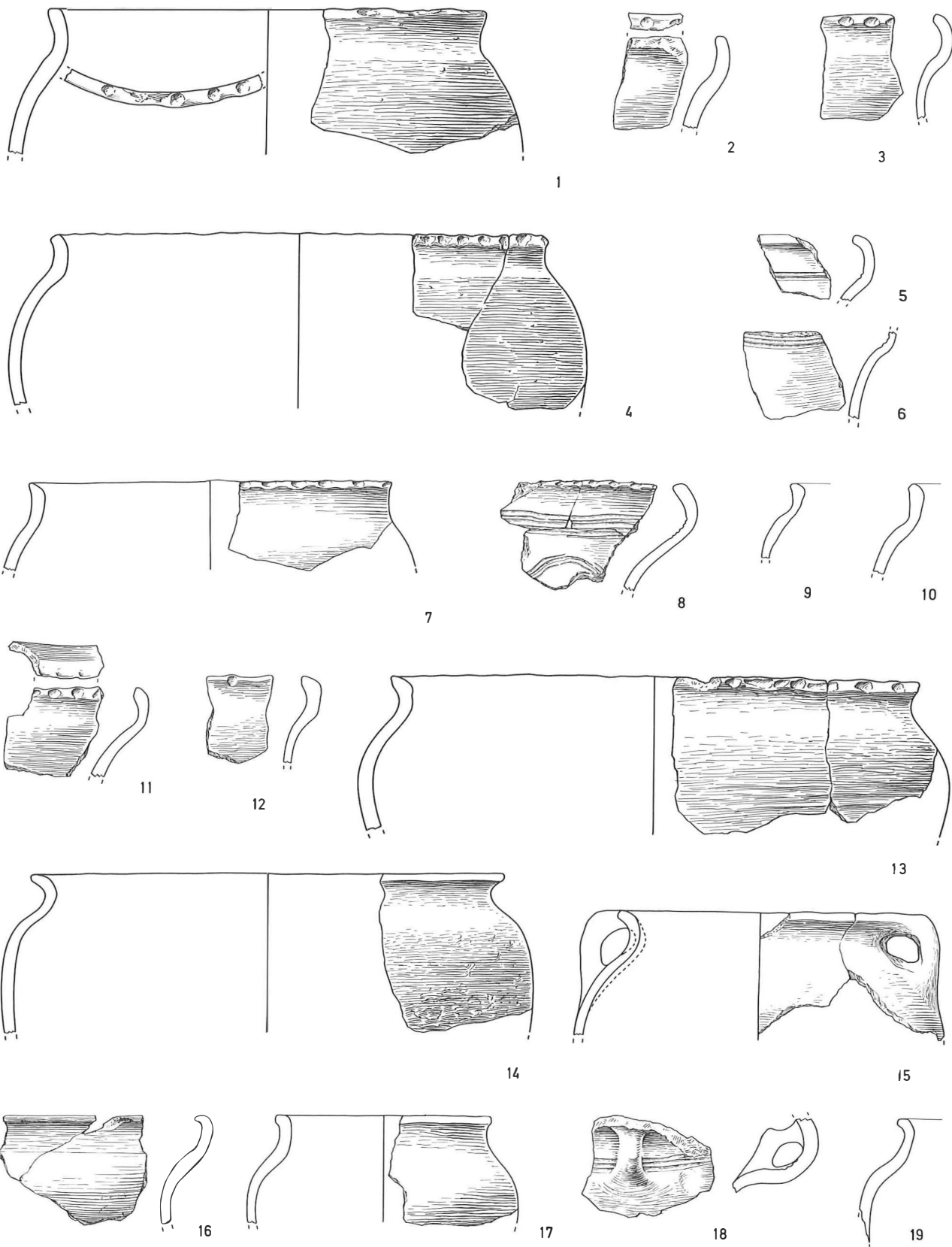
Apart from those of the granaries, lots of other posts occur. Quite often these occur in pairs, with distances of 1-2 meters. This can only be clearly seen in places where the general post density is small. Perhaps they served as racks for open air stalling of cattle. Such pairs have also been observed in British hillforts.

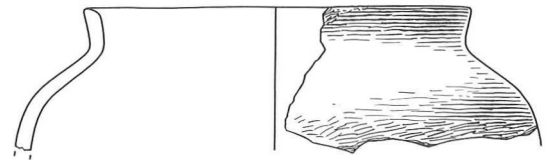
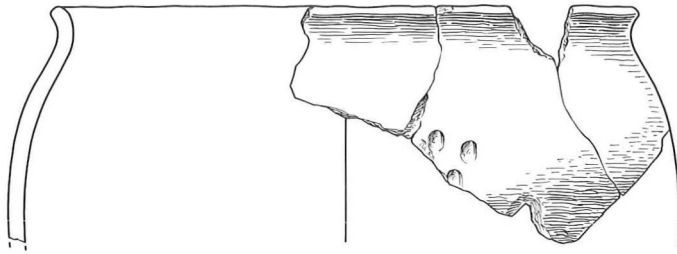
At many places posts occur inside and outside the defence system, suggesting some sort of human activity either before or after the enclosures. Although one finds a few short rows, no house plans could, however, be identified. There are palisade trenches, too, that cannot be fitted in the defence system of the enclosures. Some are later (phase 4).

The enclosure 3 cannot be dated directly. Among the stray sherds found at the site are some of the Paddepoel IV A type (fig. 43:2-8). The rims fig. 43:1 and 9, combine a RW IV-like profile with a geometrical ornamentation. No 2nd century types or Roman imports occur. A pit in front of the northern one of the two western entrances (find complex 18, fig. 42) contains PP IV C and D rims as well as some earlier elements (with *streefband* ornamentation) and may therefore date from the second half of the last century B.C. One or two sherds may belong to the PP IV A type (fig. 43:16, 17). Regrettably the pit cannot be attributed with certainty to either phase 2 or 3. The building date of phase 3 can thus only roughly be estimated between 50 B.C. and A.D. 50.

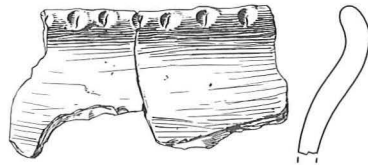


Fig. 40. Vries: pottery of types RW III (1-13) and RW IV (14-19). 1, 19: 1957 VIII 61; 8: 1957 VII 23-24; 15: 1957 VIII 17; 17: 1957 VIII 2; others: unnumbered.

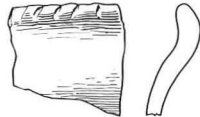




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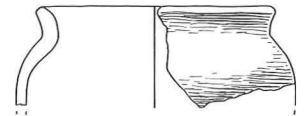
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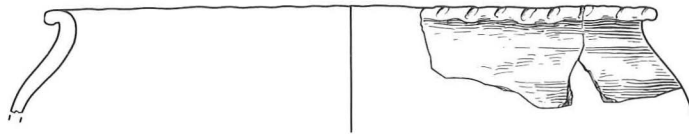
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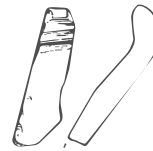
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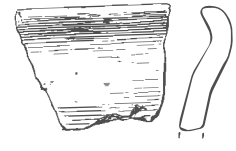
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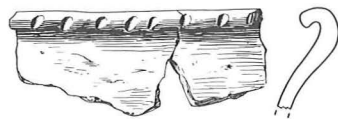
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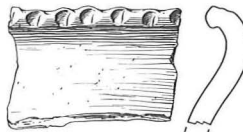
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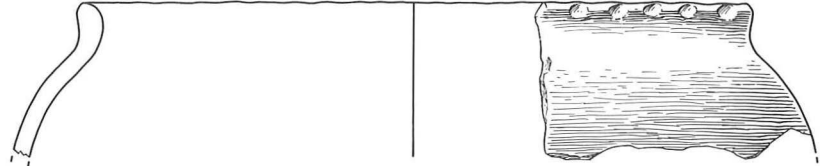
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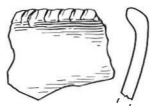
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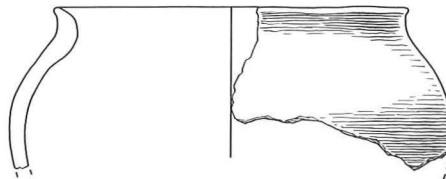
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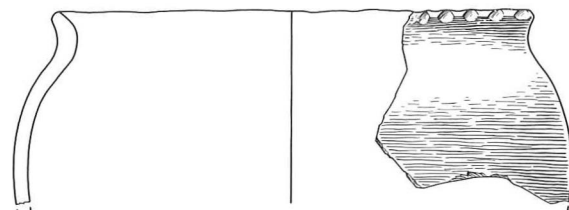
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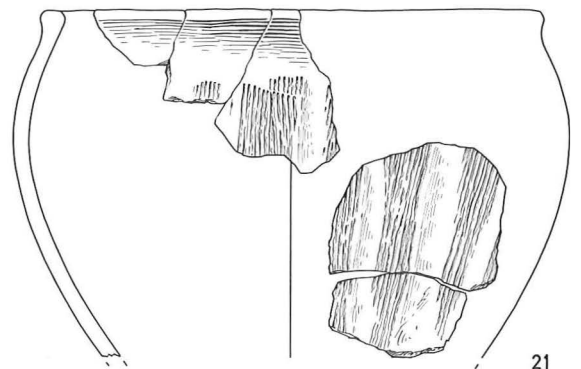
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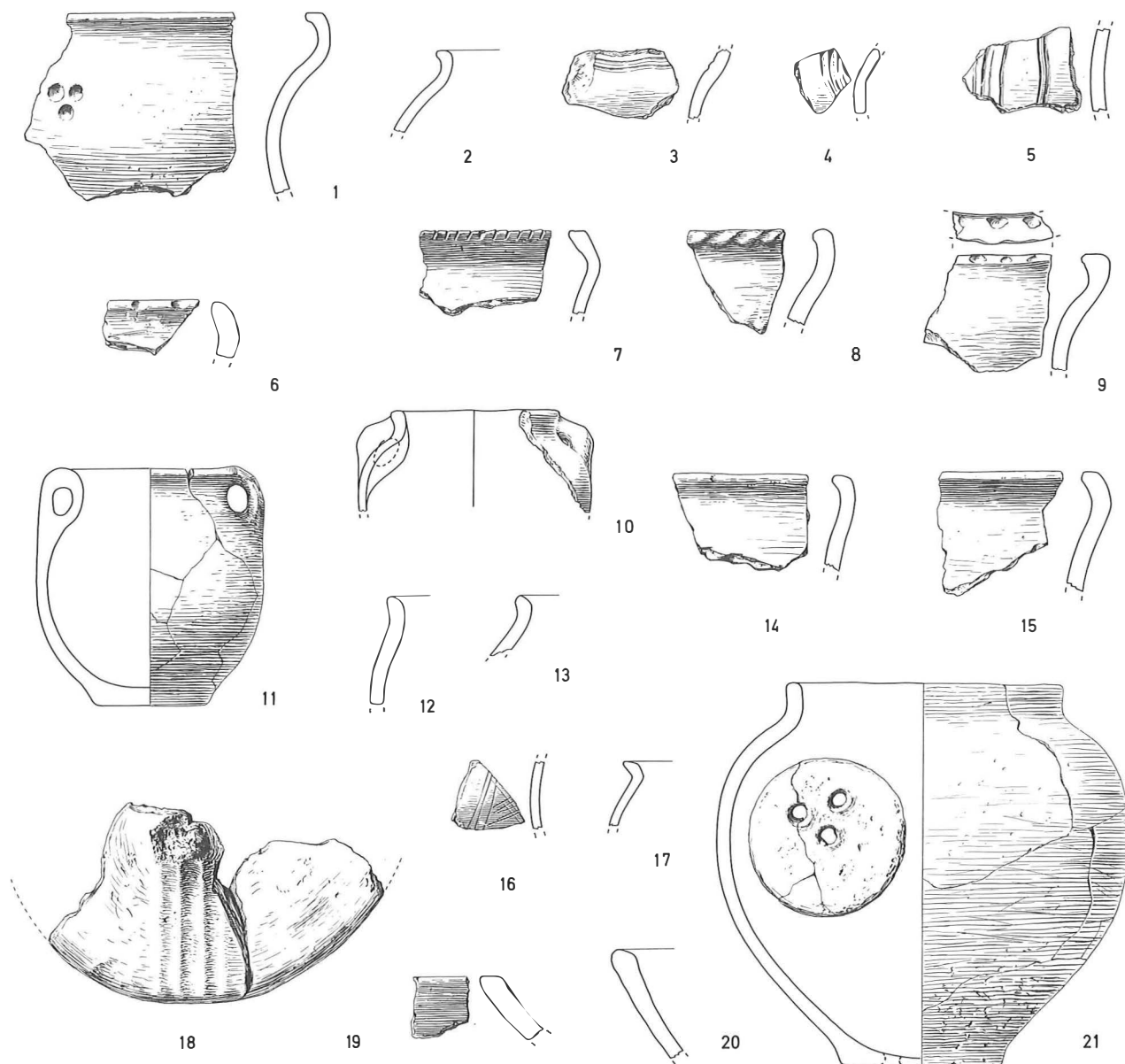
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Taking all the find material from Vries together, it is clear that it overlaps both that of Zeijen I and II. Our assumption that Zeijen II immediately succeeds Zeijen I gets support from this observation.

As further finds from the site can be mentioned an unornamented bronze neck-ring – a stray find – with a typical Latène closure (fig. 44), for which I have not been able to find an exact parallel, a rotary



Fig. 41. Vries: pottery of types PP IV C (1-15) and PP IV D (16-21). 21: 1957 VIII 35, 62; others: unnumbered.

Fig. 42. Vries: find complex 1957 VIII 18. Partly after Van Es, 1958.

quern stone, a fragment of a bronze fibula (beginning first century A.D.) and a fragment of a flint sickle (probably belonging to phase 1) with strong sheen.

One pot sherd of a 4-5th century type is some evidence for a continued occupation in the vicinity of the site. A find complex of 7-8th century A.D. date was found c. 100 m NE of the site in the direction of the present village (Harrema, 1973).

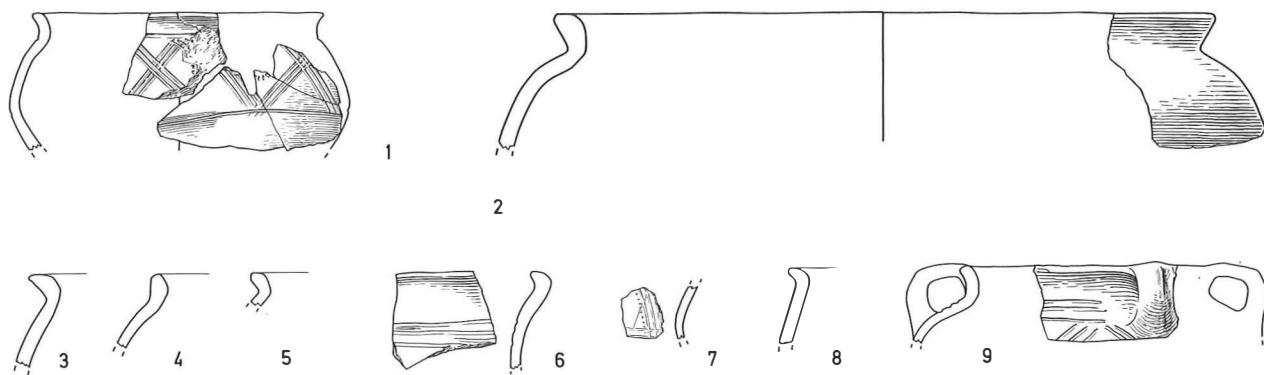
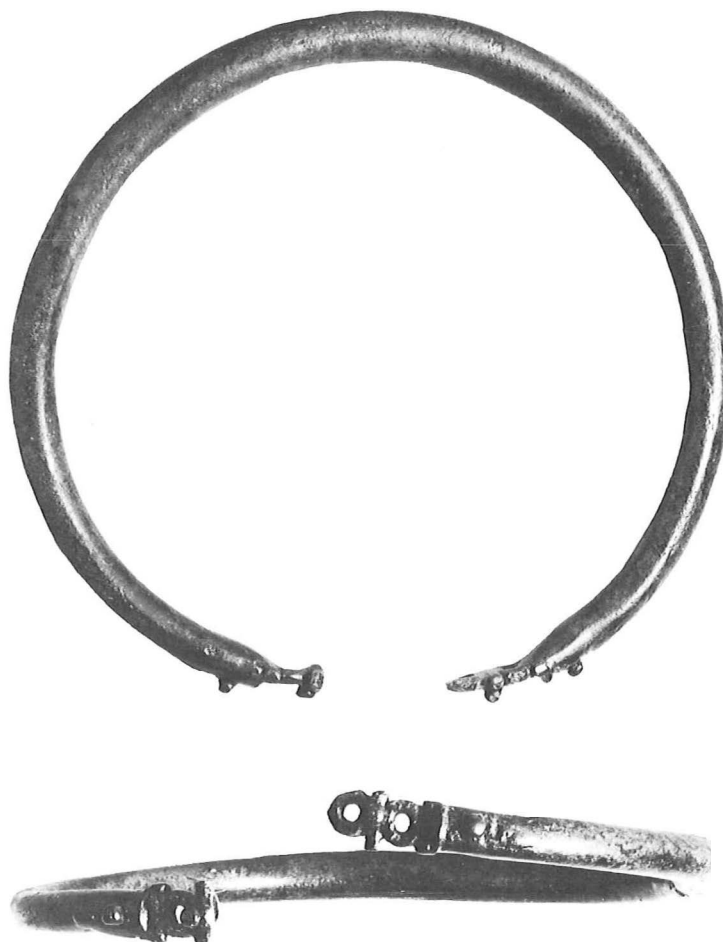


Fig. 43. Vries: stray sherds of type PP IV A. 1: 1957 VIII 19, 31; 2, 5: 1957 VIII 19; 7: 1957 VIII 37; 9: 1957 VIII 39; 3, 4, 6, 8: unnumbered.

Fig. 44. Vries: bronze neck-ring, two different views. Photo B.A.I. Max. diam. 16.8 cm.



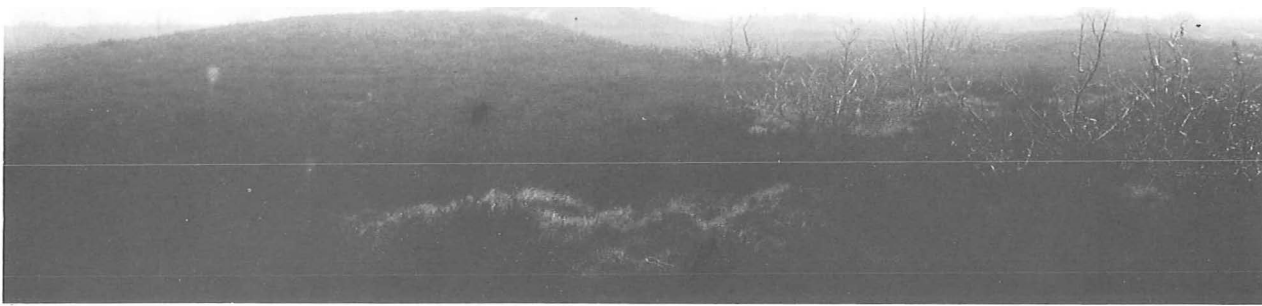


Fig. 45. Rhee: the landscape before excavation. Photo B.A.I. 1935.

The village of Vries itself certainly goes back to the early Medieval period. It is the capital village of one of the six ancient divisions of Drenthe (the *dingspil* Noordenveld). Its church was probably the first to be built in this division. The present tuff stone building dates from the 11th century, but excavations by Van Giffen in 1948 have demonstrated the existence of a wooden precursor.

All in all, it is quite possible that there is a direct link between the Iron Age occupation and the present village.

Our periodisation differs in some respects from that of Van Es (1958). He, too, has noted the presence of pottery of earlier date than the enclosure. His period I agrees with our phase 2. He deduces the presence of a low bank of no defensive value, situated inside, or perhaps outside, the palisade. His period II is our phase 3, but we meet with differences in the interpretation of the sequence of events within this phase. The innermost palisade, which we see as the inner revetment of a bank, is considered by Van Es as a secondary addition (his phase b) to a structure originally consisting of three palisades only (his phase a). Van Es does not consider the possible presence of a bank, which we think to be fully justified on the basis of the comparison with Zeijen II, where it was actually preserved.

The extra palisade, present on the SE side, is seen as evidence for a later outer addition (phase c). We are rather inclined to see the local presence of an extra palisade on the SE side as an element of the original construction. At Zeijen II, too, such a feature occurs.

I am again in agreement with Van Es in considering the outermost palisade (his phase d) as evidence for a later addition.

6. THE RHEE ENCLOSURES (figs. 45-71)

The present hamlet of Rhee is situated on a low elevation of a poorly drained plateau, 5 kilometers S of Vries and 2 kilometers SE of Zeijen. Its small field complex (*es*) was, just as at Zeijen and Vries, surrounded by oak shrub. Two kilometers to the south lies the small village of Peeloo.

In the years 1935-1938 large-scale excavations were undertaken by Van Giffen in the area NW of the *es*, when on both sides of the track to Zeijen the heathland was brought under cultivation (Van Giffen, 1937; 1938; 1940). Additional information was obtained by small campaigns in later years. For the general plan see fig. 49.

The Neolithic period is represented in the excavated area by finds from the PF Beaker Culture. The Bronze Age is not represented. About 200 m S of the excavated area, Van Giffen had excavated in 1925 a Neolithic tumulus with a Late Bronze Age urn as a secondary interment (Van Giffen, 1946). From the Early Iron Age, with a Celtic field, a barrow cemetery and various house remains, human activity at the site continues up to the Early Medieval period. The long period of occupation makes the analysis of the site difficult.

The excavation (figs. 45-48) met with great difficulties, because of the uneven quality of the soil traces due to the fact that the site is situated in the border zone of heathland and oak wood. The mo-



Fig. 46. Rhee: northern palisade of enclosure, phase 4. Photo B.A.I. 1935.

dern road to Zeijen, cutting obliquely through the main settlement area, was another handicap. Some stratigraphic information could be obtained from the excavation of the barrows.

(1) Remains of a Celtic field at the site have been identified, both in the field by Van Giffen, and by Brongers from air photographs. Field and air documentation partly overlap. The field system remains occur to the west, north and east of the main excavated area (fig. 2).

The layer of cultivated soil, recognized under all five Iron Age barrows that have been excavated, as well as possibly some fences (fig. 50) all fit in the context of the Celtic field. The same applies to

some house plans, pits with RW I type pottery, and possibly some granaries.

House no. 1 preceded the plough-soil under a barrow. Two ring-ditches preceded the plough-soil under another barrow. Under a third barrow a pit with RW I pottery was found in the same position. This is the reason why I have assigned the house plans, pits, granaries and ring-ditches to phase 1a (fig. 50) and the plough-soil, as far as documented, to phase 1b (fig. 51). We must realize, however, that the plough-soil may locally have been of different age and that the same applies to the house-plans.

All house-plans are fragmentary and that renders any typological considerations difficult. Because of the large distance between the roof support pairs, plans 1, 2 and 5 (fig. 52) are very probably of Early Iron Age (or even Late Bronze Age) date. Plan 3 is

reckoned to this phase on much less sure grounds, for only three possible roof supports have been found. The wall appears to have consisted of a double row of posts. An Early Iron Age house of this type has been found at Angelslo. It should be noted that the plan is composed from evidence obtained during three different campaigns. Building 4 seems to have an inner line of double posts; this feature, too, has been observed at Angelslo.

Building 1 was found under the plough-soil below a barrow. I assume that it is only the stable part of a house, the other part of which, outside the barrow, at the same place as a square-ditch, has not been observed. Transversely elongated post-holes do occur frequently at the entrances of Iron Age houses.

It may well be that at other parts of the site, too, conditions were unfavourable for the recognition of complete house plans. Only those pits have been put on the plan that have yielded pottery of RW I type. As an example I am illustrating the find numbers 78, 85, 97, 107, 111 and 115 from such pits (figs. 61-63). Further finds from the Zeijen culture

are illustrated on figs. 64 and 65. Some vessels in these figures may actually be somewhat older (*e.g.* fig. 64:1, 2, 4).

(2) A cemetery, consisting of barrows over cremation pyres (phase 2a, fig. 53), square and rectangular ditches and some isolated cremation pits (phase 2b, fig. 54) constitute the next occupational stage in the eastern part of the excavated area. On fig. 54, the find-places of pottery with typical RW III type rims have been added (nos. 114, 110 and, less sure, 80) (see fig. 67). Among the stray finds from the road is also a sherd of RW III type (fig. 67:4). The preceding RW II stage is only represented by a stray sherd (fig. 66:8) and – with some reserve – by find complex 89 (fig. 66:1-7).

The age of the ten barrows, only five of which have been excavated, cannot be determined with certainty. By themselves, the pyre barrows could be of Early Iron Age date, but in view of their stratigraphic position those here excavated might well be

Fig. 47. Rhee: general view of excavation in southeastern part of settlement, seen from the SW. Photo B.A.I. 1935.





Fig. 48. Rhee: barrow I with plough-traces and house plan in the subsoil. Photo B.A.I. 1935.

of Late Iron Age (Latène) date. The bowl found in the ash layer of the southernmost tumulus (fig. 68) is difficult to place in the RW type sequence. It has some parallels in the Ruinen cemetery (Waterbolk, 1965), one of these (*l.c.*, fig. 6:11) being situated in the same late part of the cemetery in which a RW III pot (*l.c.*, fig. 6:6) occurs.

A comparable cemetery of pyre barrows with adjacent square ditches at Ballo (5 km to the E of Rhee) yielded *Segelohringe* of Latène type (Van Giffen, 1935). South of the excavated area two more barrows of the same type have been recorded.

Pyre barrows encroaching over a Celtic field have been observed at various other places, such as

Zeijen (Noordse Veld), Hijken and Havelte.

(3, 4) The next features at the site are two, apparently successive, square to slightly trapezoidal enclosures (fig. 55). The fragmentary character of the palisades of the smaller one suggests that it was the first to be built (fig. 56).

It was only after long consideration that I came to the conclusion that in both cases the enclosure originally consisted of an earth wall with palisade face. For the larger enclosure the main direct arguments are the slight turn inward of the palisade at some of the entrances and the nature and position of the entrance gates (rarely occurring in this way in normal palisade fences). For the small one the double palisade line is, of course, a good indication, but here we have no clear entrances giving further proof. In neither case are there ditches to support our interpretation. A further argument for the as-

sumption of an earth wall in phase 4 (fig. 57) is the fact that at the eastern and southern side just enough space for an earth wall is available between the palisades of phases 3 and 4. The succession of the enclosures 3 and 4 at Rhee is thus reminiscent of the succession of phases 2 and 3 at Zeijen I. Indirect support for our assumption is given by the general comparability of the plans with Zeijen I (phase 2) and Vries (phase 2), and by the unusual appearance of the buildings inside the enclosures.

We can identify the remains of at least seven buildings, all inside the small enclosure. In one (or two) cases the plans partly overlap, so that they cannot have existed contemporaneously. Since both at the W and E sides they seem to keep away from the wall, it is assumed that this was also the case with regard to the N and S wall. If one further assumes that they were never built too closely to each other, the possibility suggests itself of buildings 6, 7 and 8 belonging to phase 3 and buildings 9, 10, 11 and 12 to phase 4.

The road Rhee-Zeijen cuts obliquely through all buildings, so that none of them could be excavated completely. The area east of the road was excavated in 1937, that west of the road in 1935. Apparently the conditions for observation were better when the eastern part was excavated.

Not much can be said about the details of the houses. At the eastern end the regular spacing of upright pairs suggests a function as stable. Wall posts are generally present. The western parts are more varied. In buildings 6, 9 and 10 wall posts are present but uprights are lacking, which suggests another type of roof construction in the western part. In building 12 the center is free of inner posts. The western part of building 7 seems to have a double row of wall posts; there is a line of three posts in the axis of the house. In the SE part of the camp, with buildings 8 and 12, soil conditions appear to have been particularly poor.

These features connect the complex of Rhee with a site recently excavated at Noord Barge (Harrema, 1976). There, the settlement consisted of six parallel houses with very regular spacing, within one rectangular fence (not a wall). The houses themselves showed great variability in construction: both three-aisled, two-aisled and one-aisled parts occurred, even within one building. The site dates probably from the last century B.C.

The buildings of Rhee show no clear evidence for entrances. Only no. 6 may have had one at the short eastern side, where there is a wide space between the wall posts. Such an entrance would be compatible with a function of that part of the house as a stable. Nowhere do we see entrances in the long sides. Admittedly, the road has destroyed long stretches of the walls, but for example with house 9, one would expect a pair of opposite entrances about half way along the long walls, which clearly does not exist. It is quite possible, therefore, that the buildings of Rhee were barns only, just as at Zeijen I.

The distribution of the finds of 2nd-3rd century A.D. terra sigillata at the site might be seen as an *a priori* argument for a late date of the enclosures. Of the six find numbers with this pottery – nos. 4, 8, 10, 16, 21 and 81 – four occur within the enclosed area. Further analysis, however, results in a preference for an earlier date.

The house no. 5 – with finds of the Zeijen culture – and the three parallel ditches, which are part of the cemetery (phase 2b) – are a *terminus post quem* for the enclosures. In the NE corner the palisade of phase 4 is cut by a sunken hut, one of which contains a sherd of terra nigra-like pottery (no. 69, see fig. 71:2). In his study of the Wijster pottery, Van Es (1967) suggests a 4th century date, but since the same pottery occurs at the neighbouring site of Peelo in a milieu dominated by 2nd century A.D. pottery types, including 2nd century terra sigillata, I definitely prefer the earlier date.

Some pits with 2nd century pottery types inside the large enclosure (phase 4) are situated in such a way that contemporaneity with either enclosure is improbable. This applies to the well in square F-7 (with finds 23 and 24) and the small pit in square M-7 with find no. 51 (fig. 70:1-5). The sunken hut in square H-7 with find no. 16 (o.a. a terra sigillata sherd) cannot be contemporary with house 7 (phase 3) nor with house 10 (phase 4).

In squares J-4/5 and K-7 palisade fragments occur that seem to be part of the system, which we consider as contemporary with the sunken huts in square L-3 and the houses 14 and 13 (phase 5).

Taking everything together, it seems justified to consider the 2nd century A.D. remains in the area rather as a *terminus ante quem* for the enclosures than as representing the period of their use.

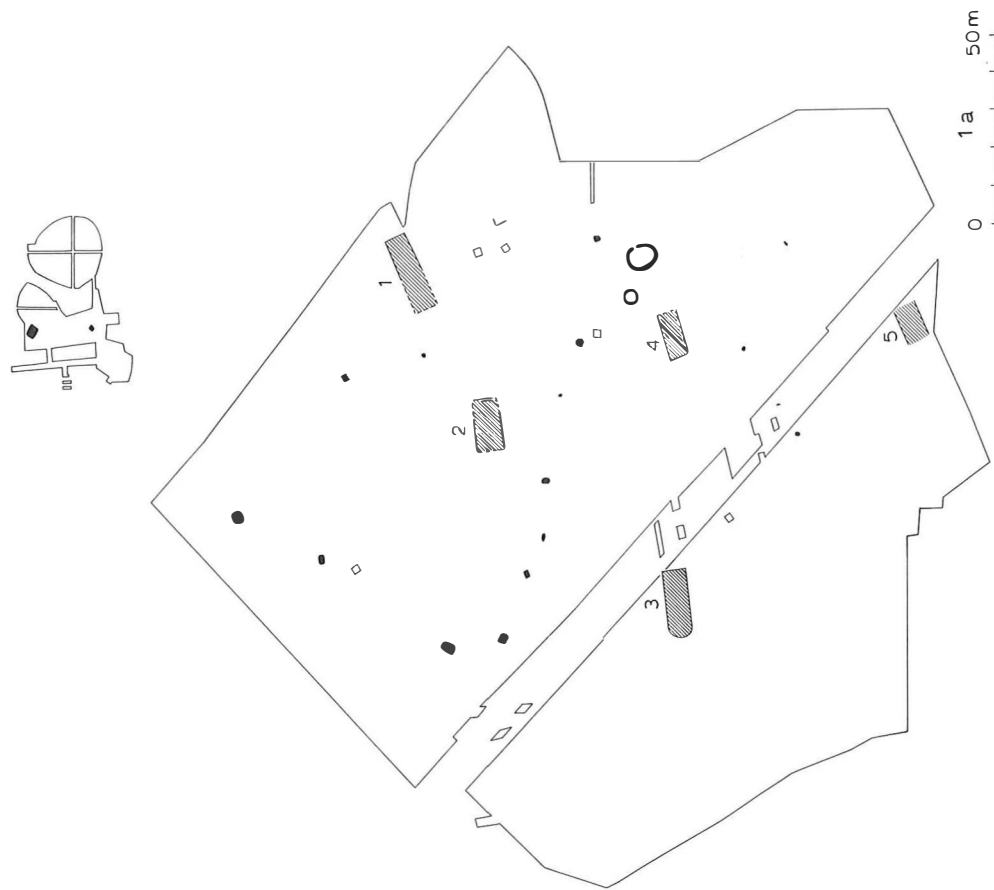


Fig. 50. Rhee: phase 1a. Scale 1:2000.

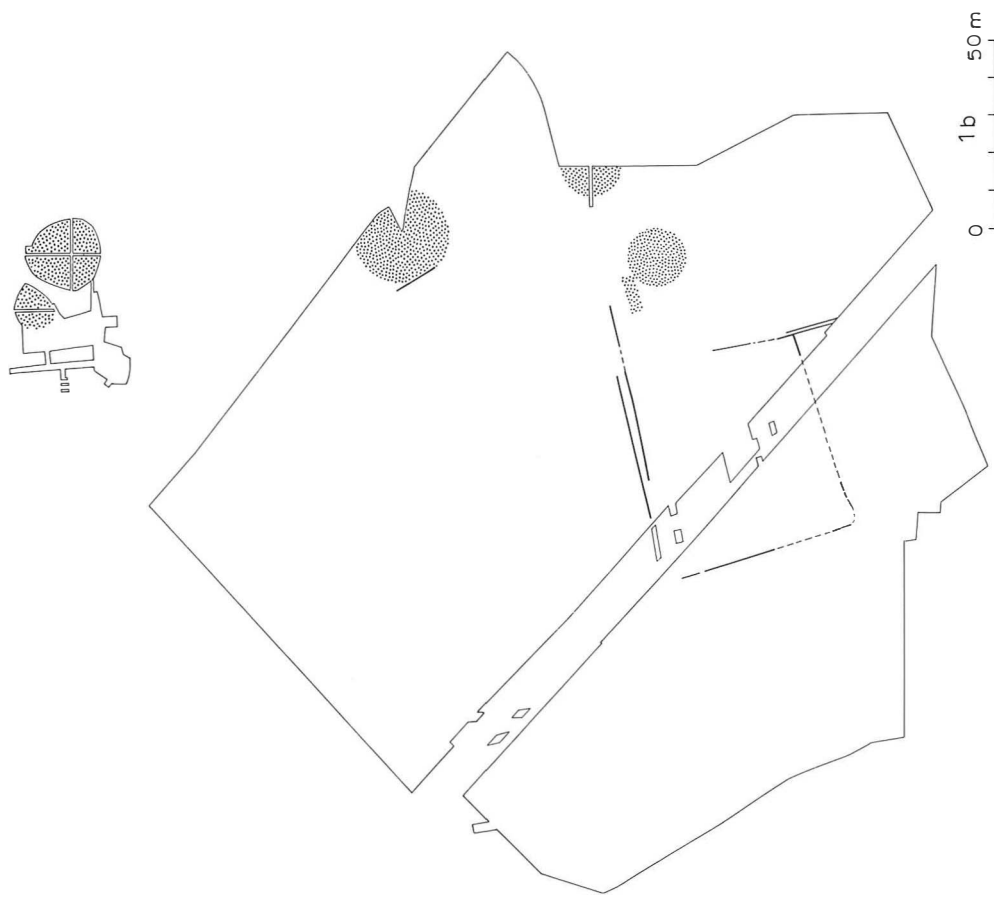


Fig. 51. Rhee: phase 1b. Scale 1:2000.



Fig. 52. Rhee: phase I, house plans 1-5. Scale 1:200.

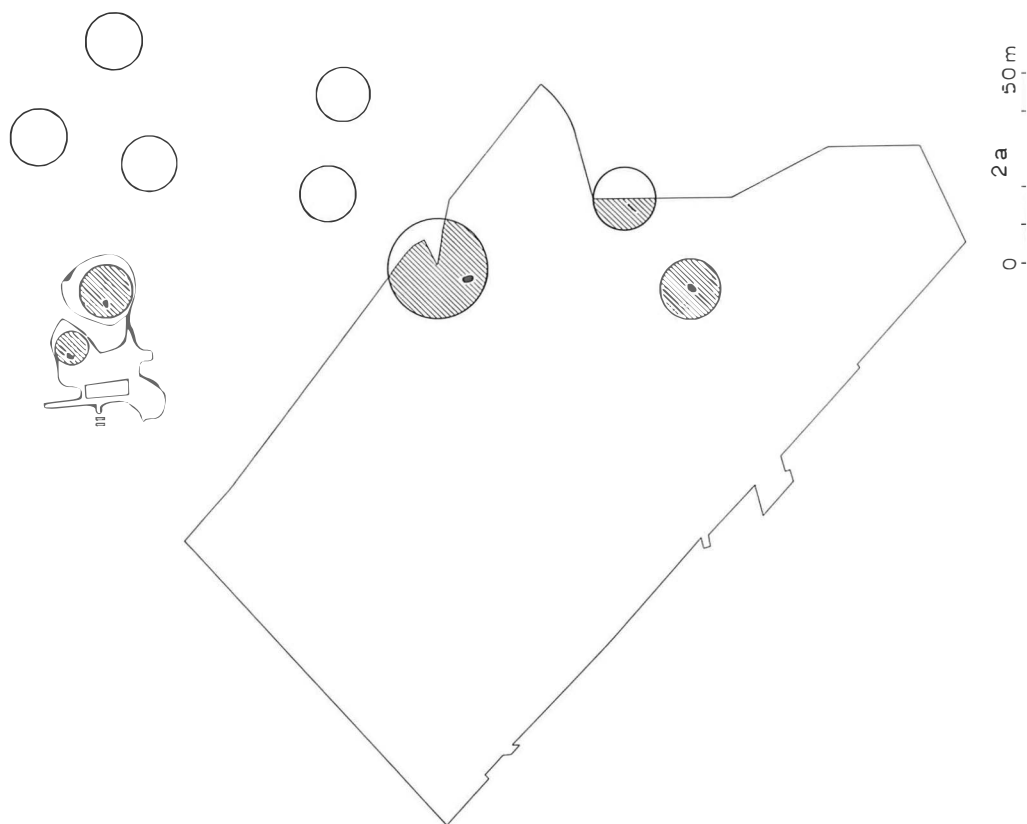


Fig. 53. Rhee: phase 2a. Scale 1:2000.

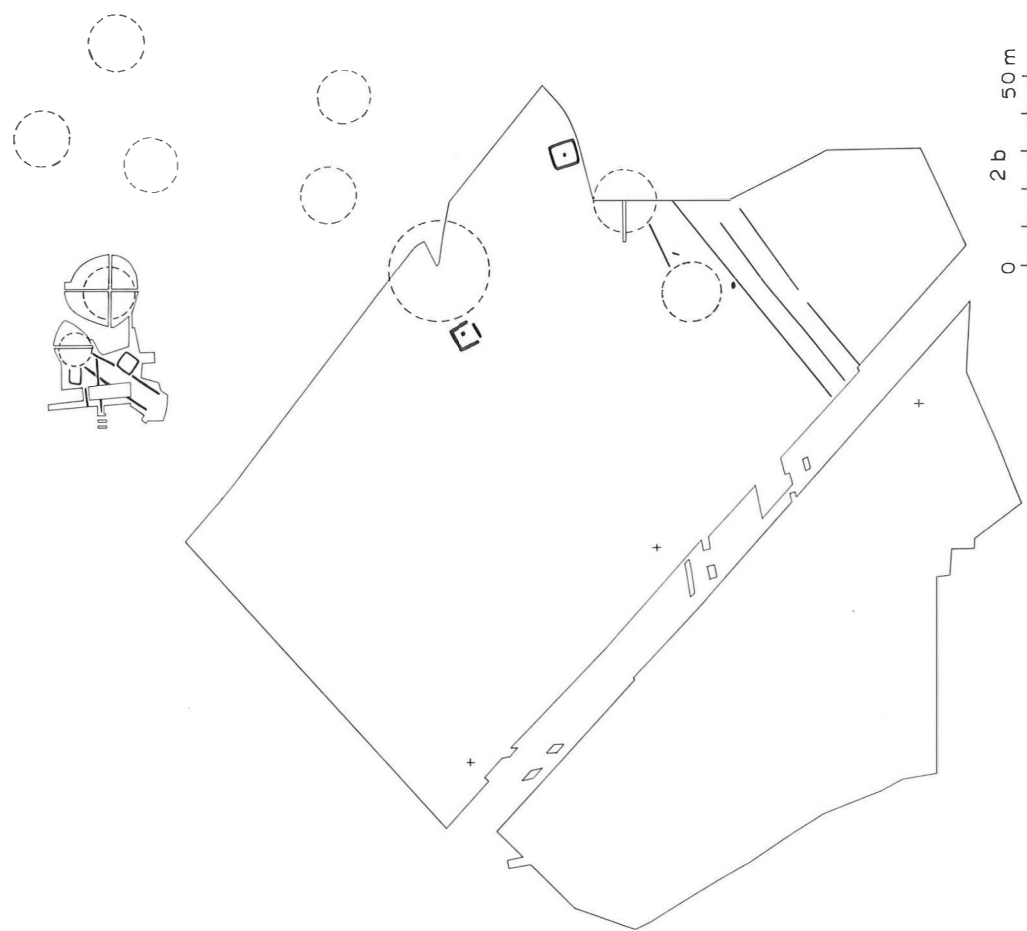


Fig. 54. Rhee: phase 2b. Scale 1:2000.

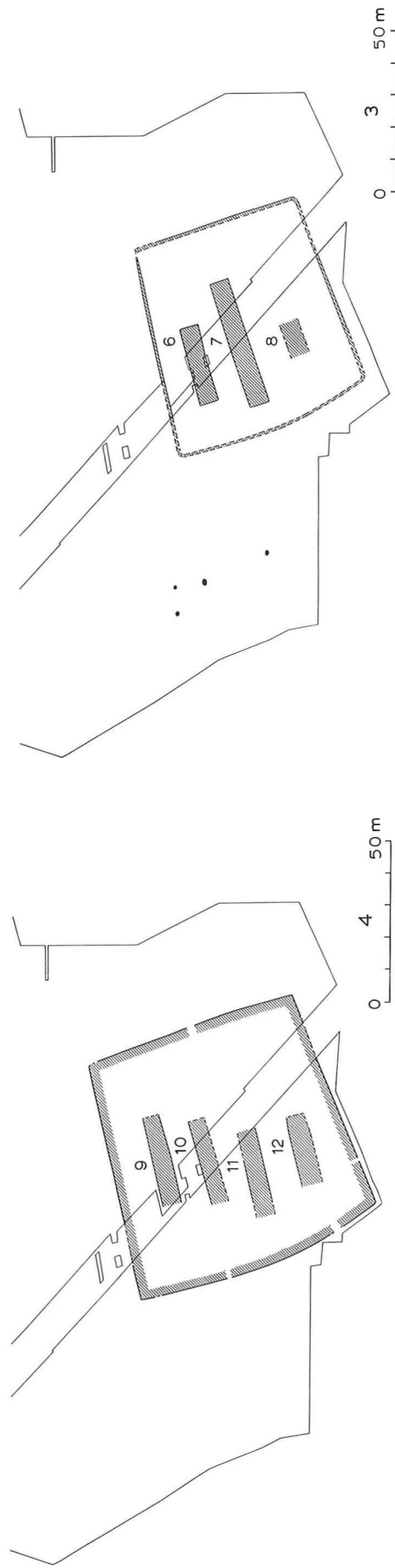


Fig. 55. Rhee: phases 3 and 4. Scale 1:2000.

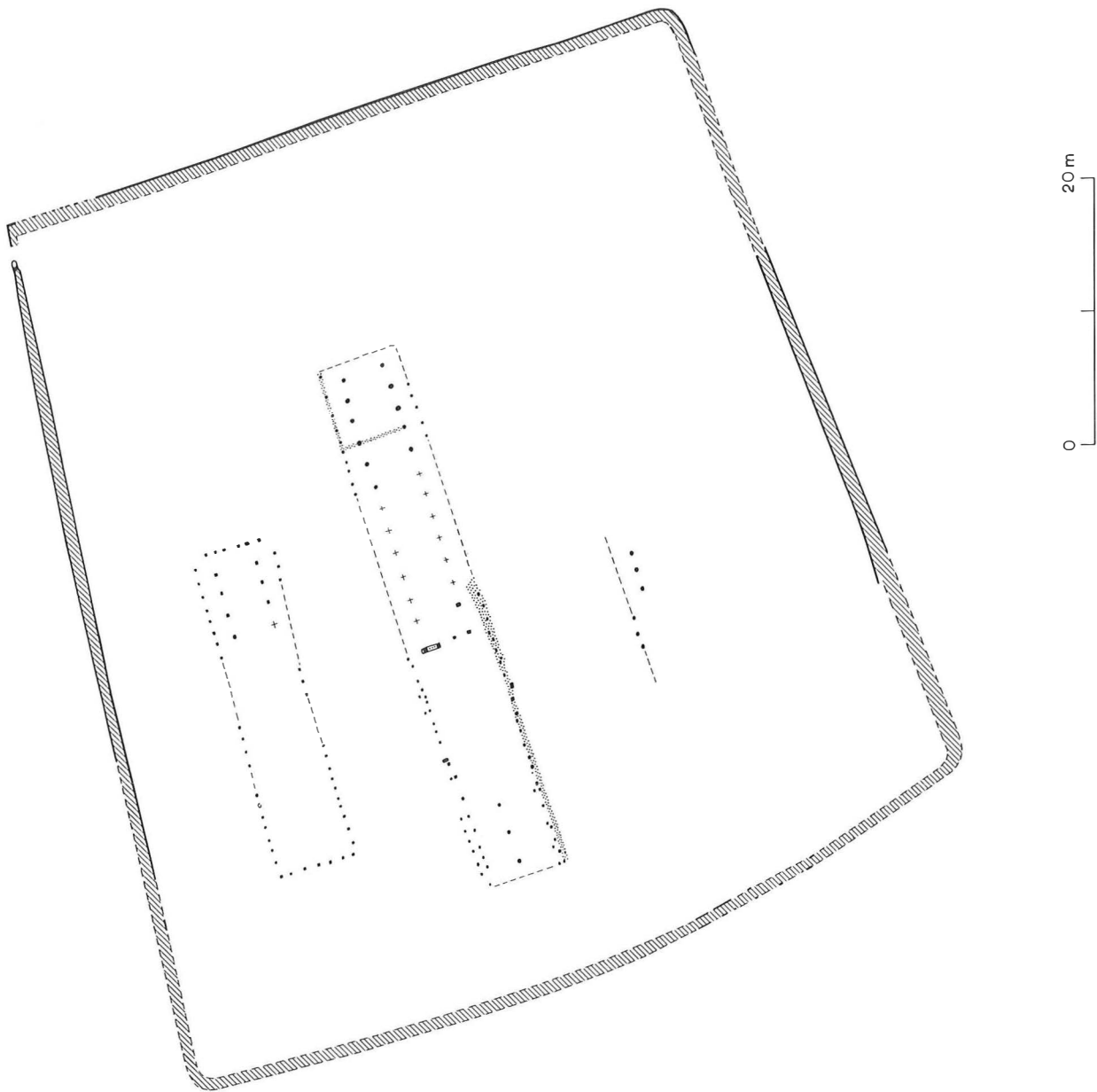


Fig. 56. Rhee: phase 3. Scale 1:500.

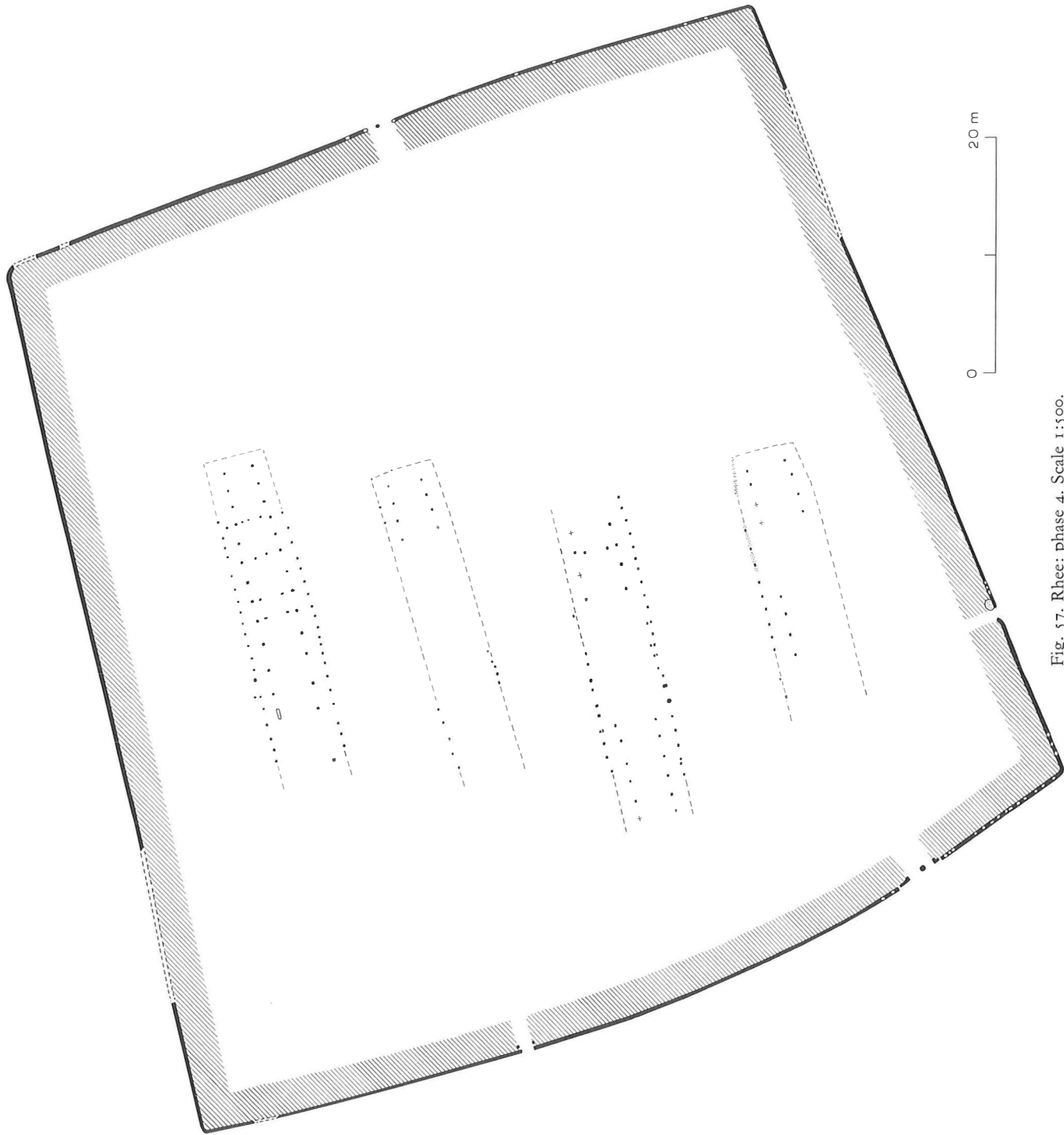


Fig. 57. Rhee: phase 4. Scale 1:500.

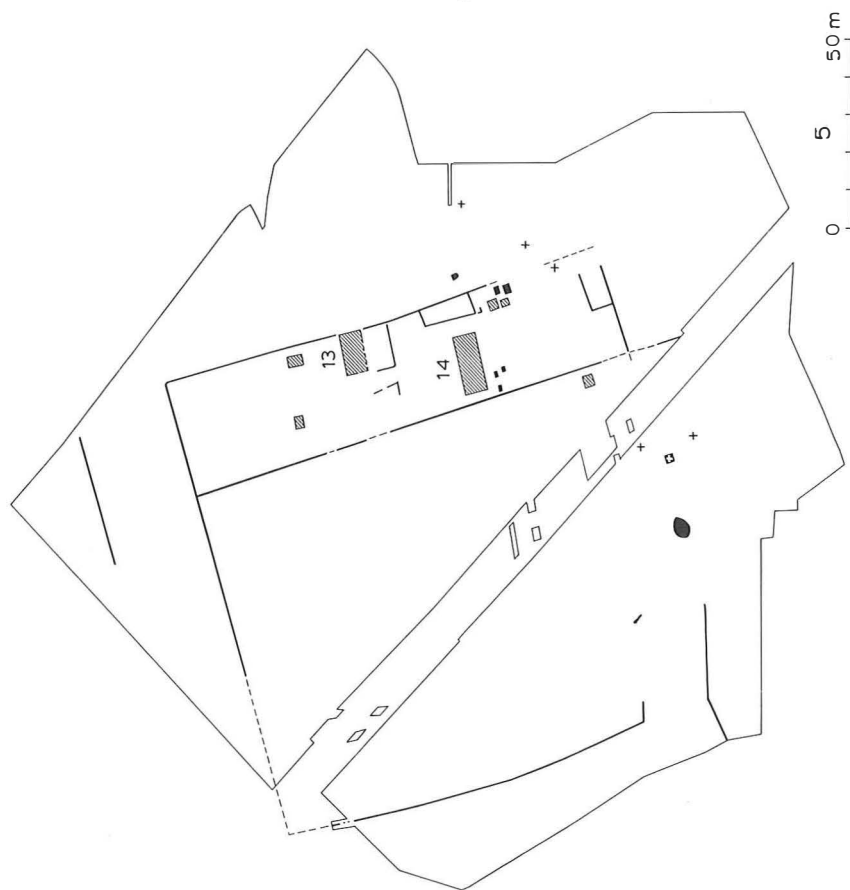


Fig. 58. Rhee: phase 5. Scale 1:2000.

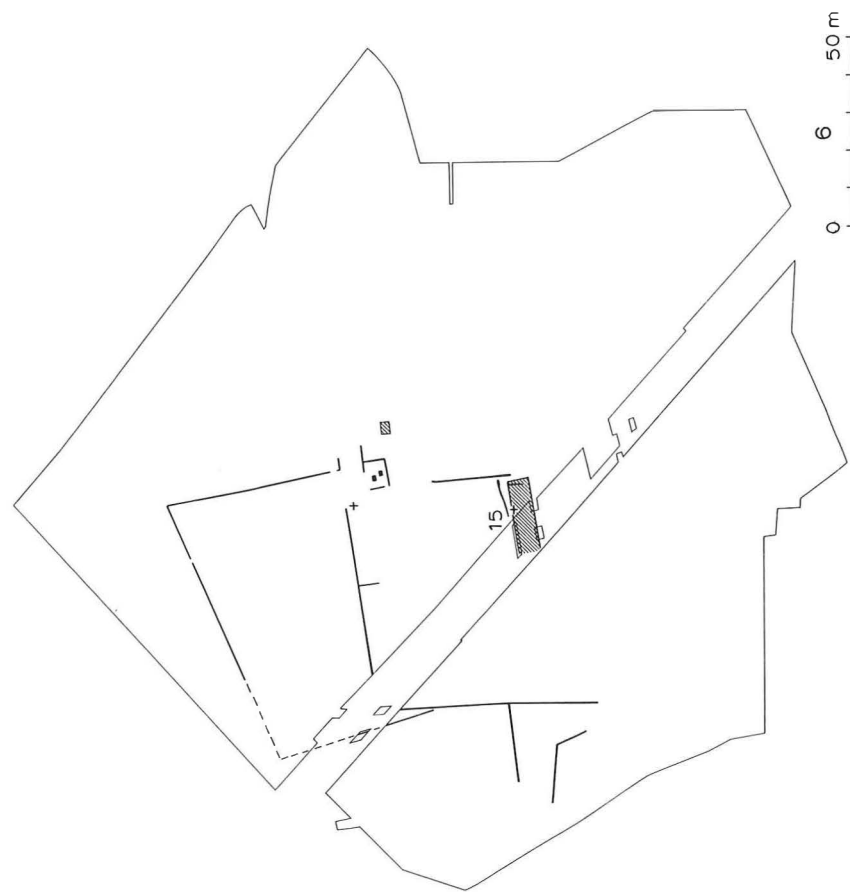


Fig. 59. Rhee: phase 6. Scale 1:2000.

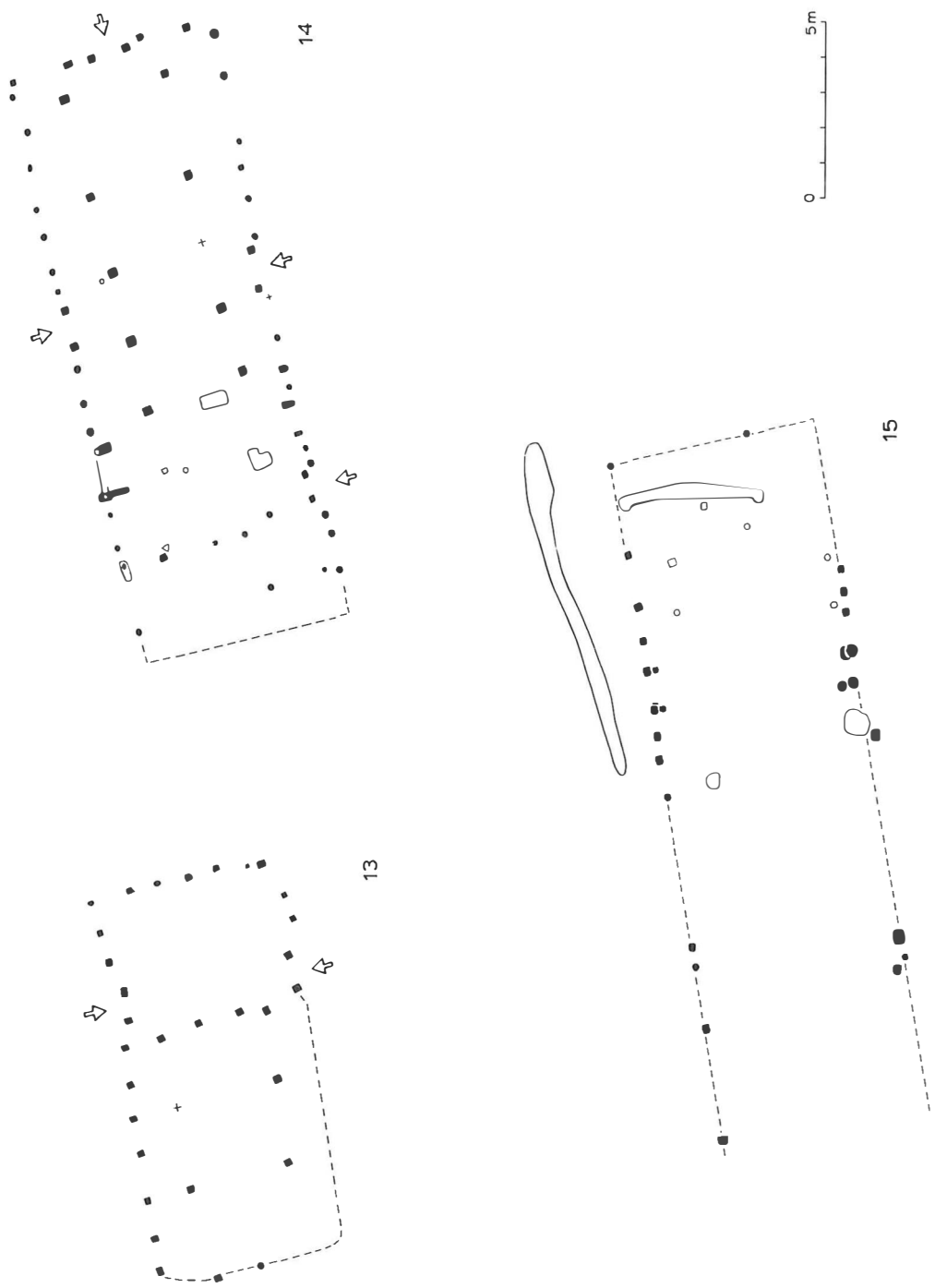
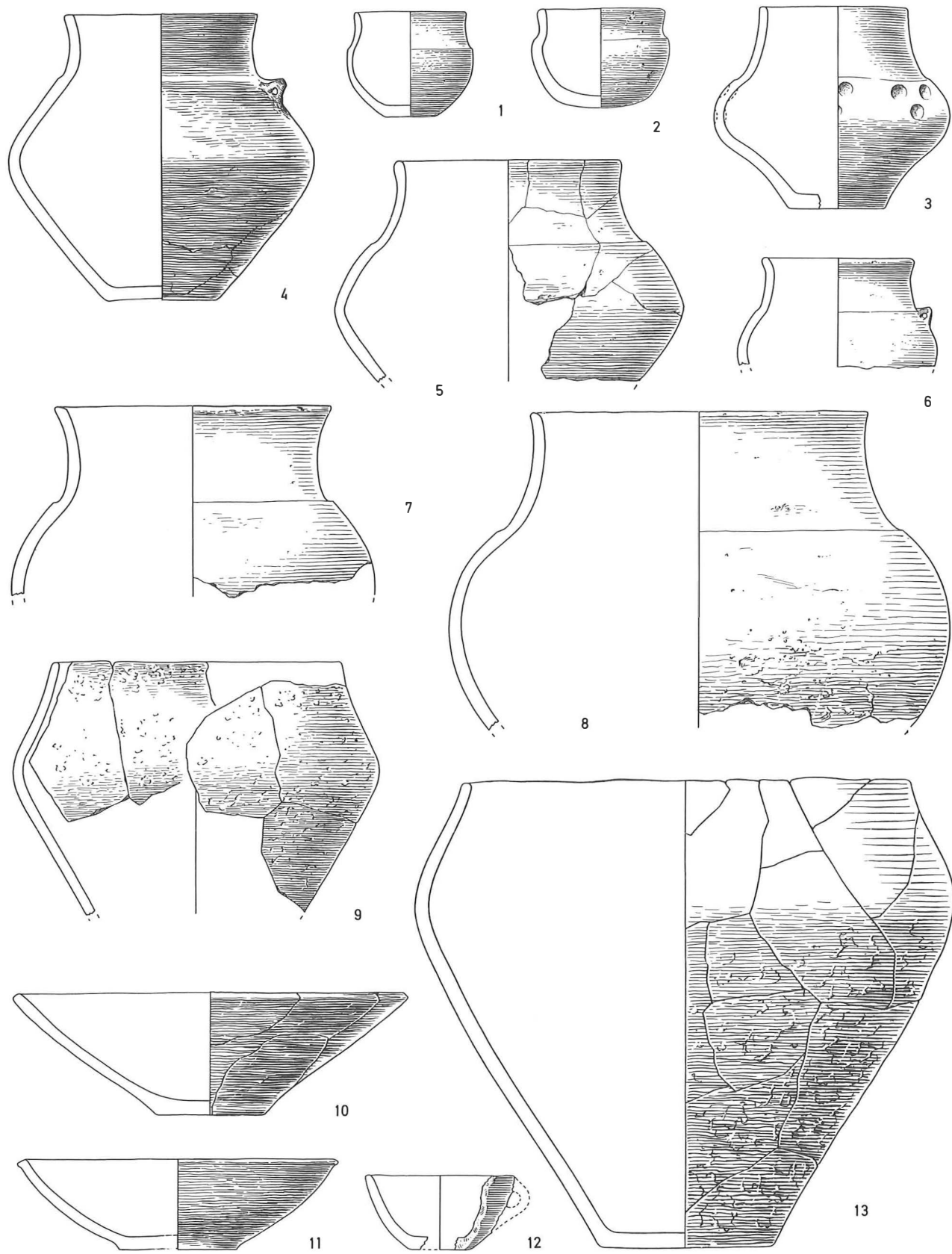


Fig. 60. Rhee: phases 5 and 6. House plans 13-15.



154 Fig. 61. Rhee: find complex 1938 III 111.

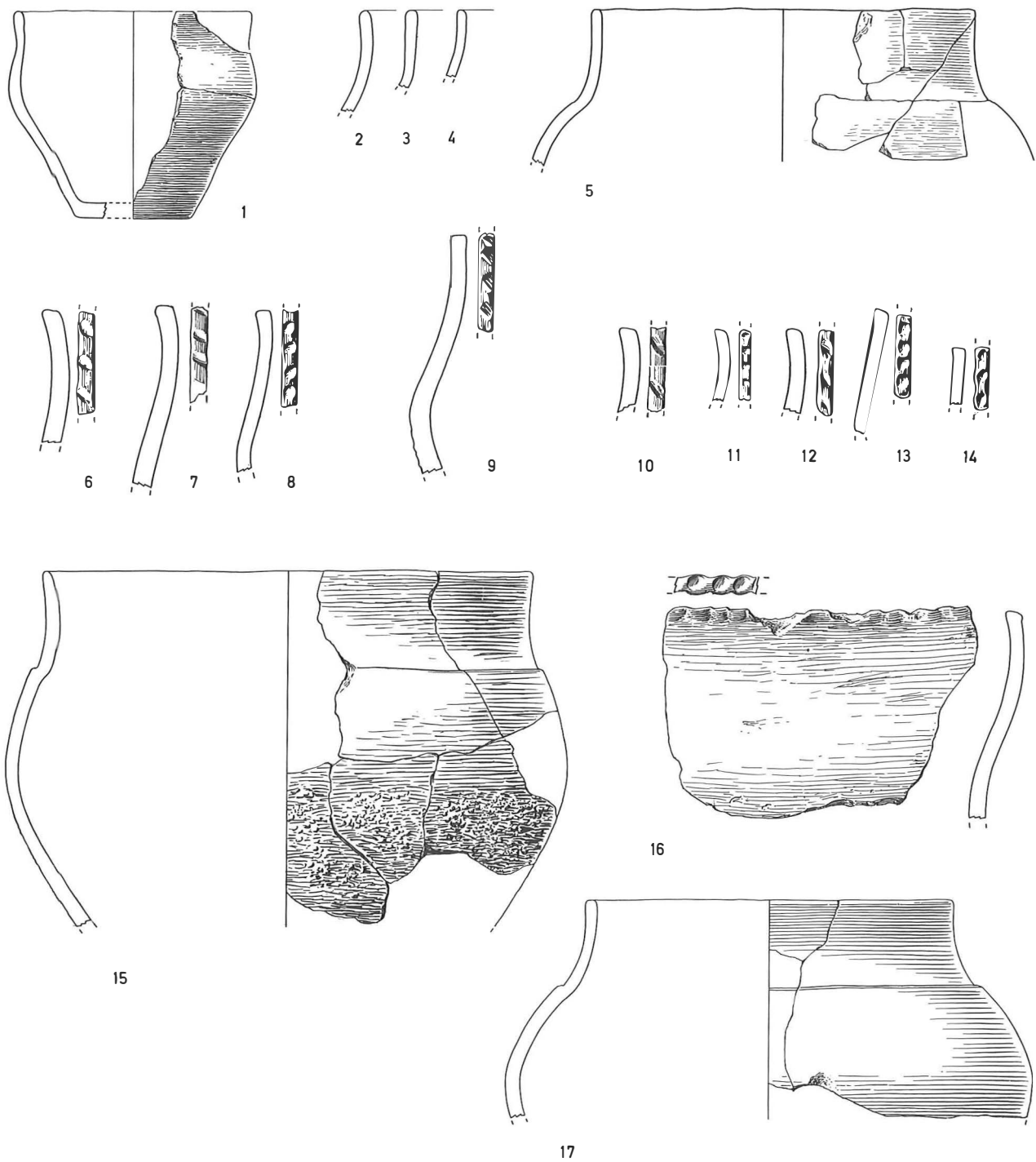


Fig. 62. Rhee: find complexes 1937 IV 78 (1-14) and 1938 III 115 (15-17).

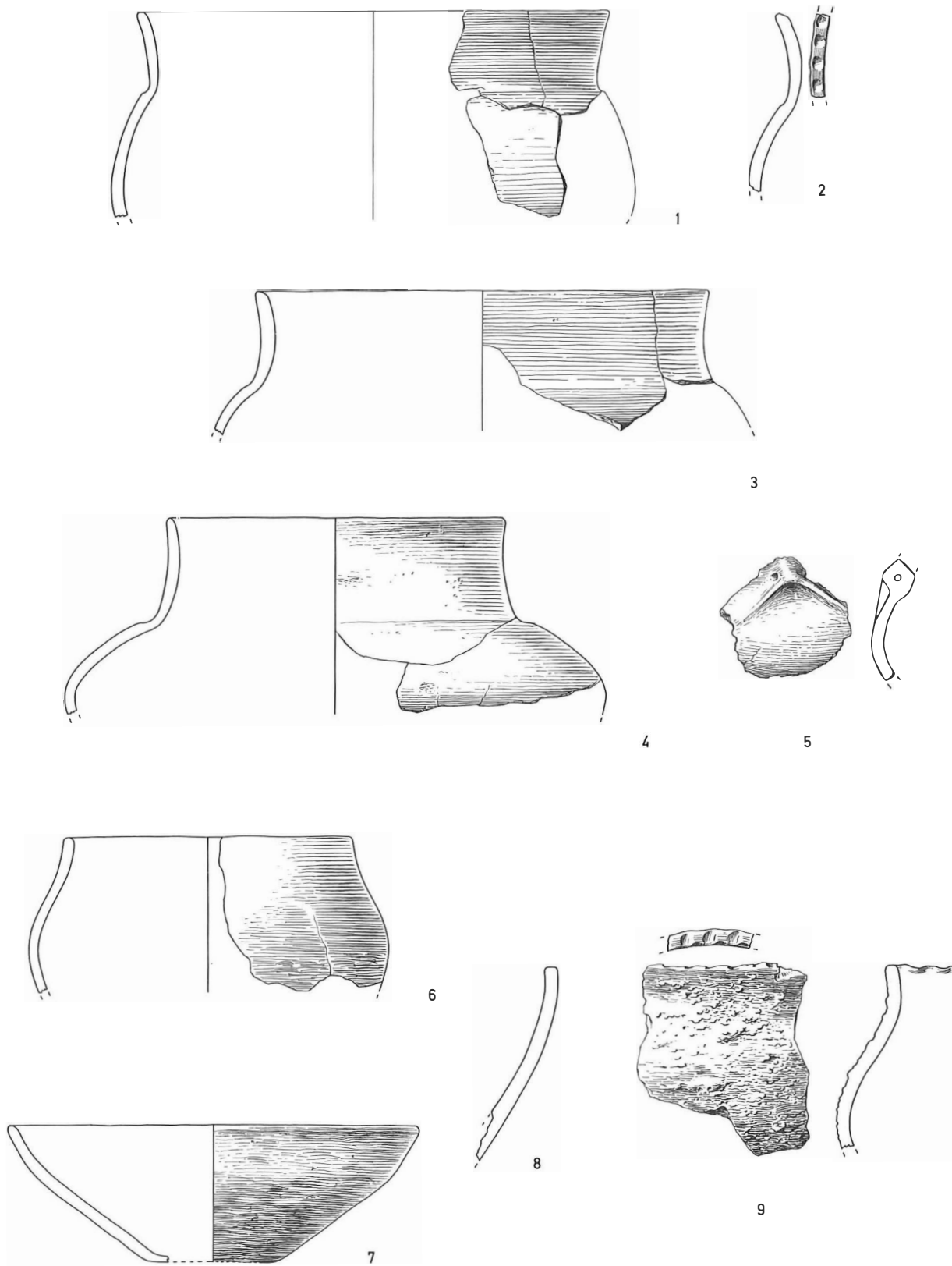
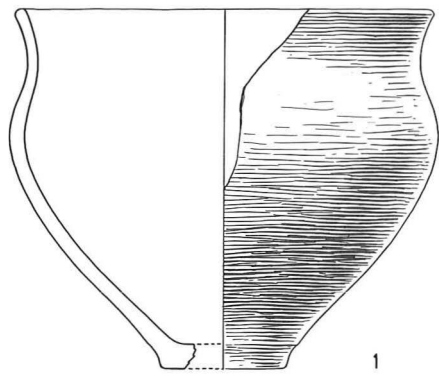
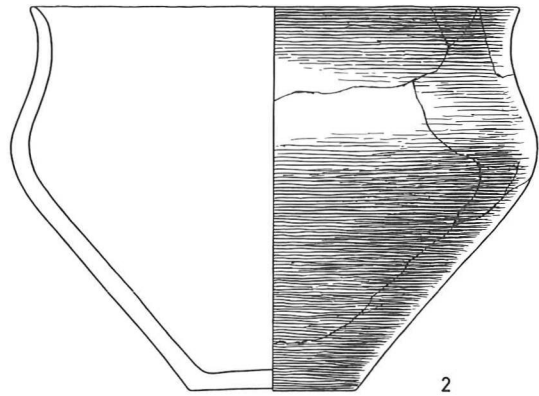


Fig. 64. Rhee: various pottery finds of Late Bronze Age types (1, 2, 4) and RW I type (3, 5-9). 1: 1935 V 31; 2, 4: 1935 V 48; 3: 1938 III 112; 5: 1935 V 21; 6: 1938 III 121; 7: 1935 V 20; 8: 1935 V 19; 9: 1935 V 49.

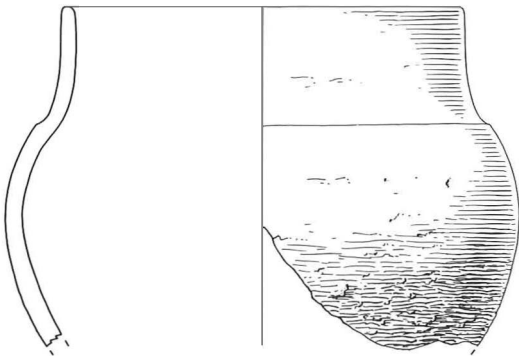
Fig. 63. Rhee: find complexes 1937 IV 85 (1-3), 1937 IV 97 (4-5) and 1938 III 107 (6-9).



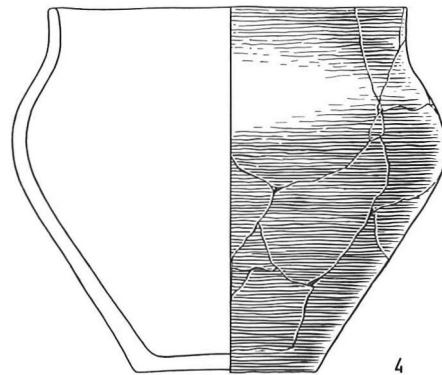
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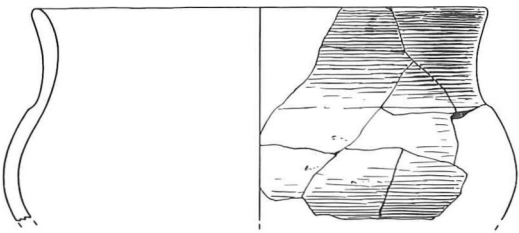
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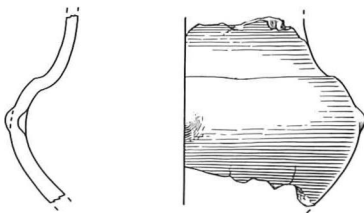
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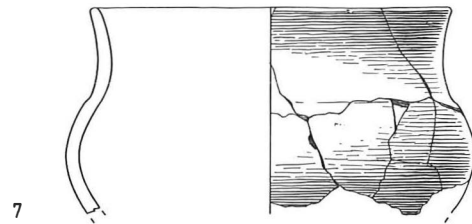
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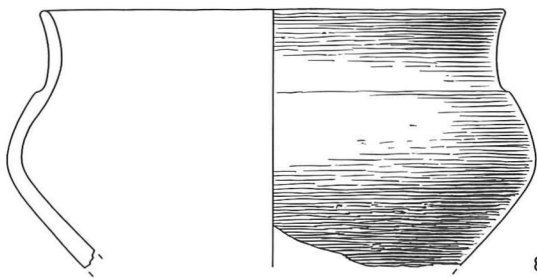
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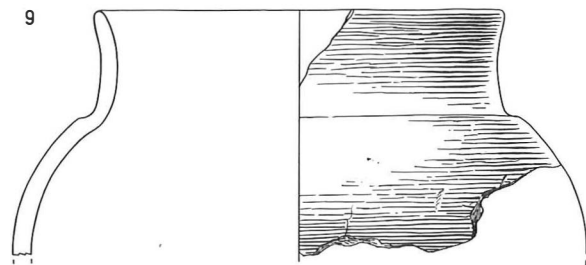
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Fig. 64.

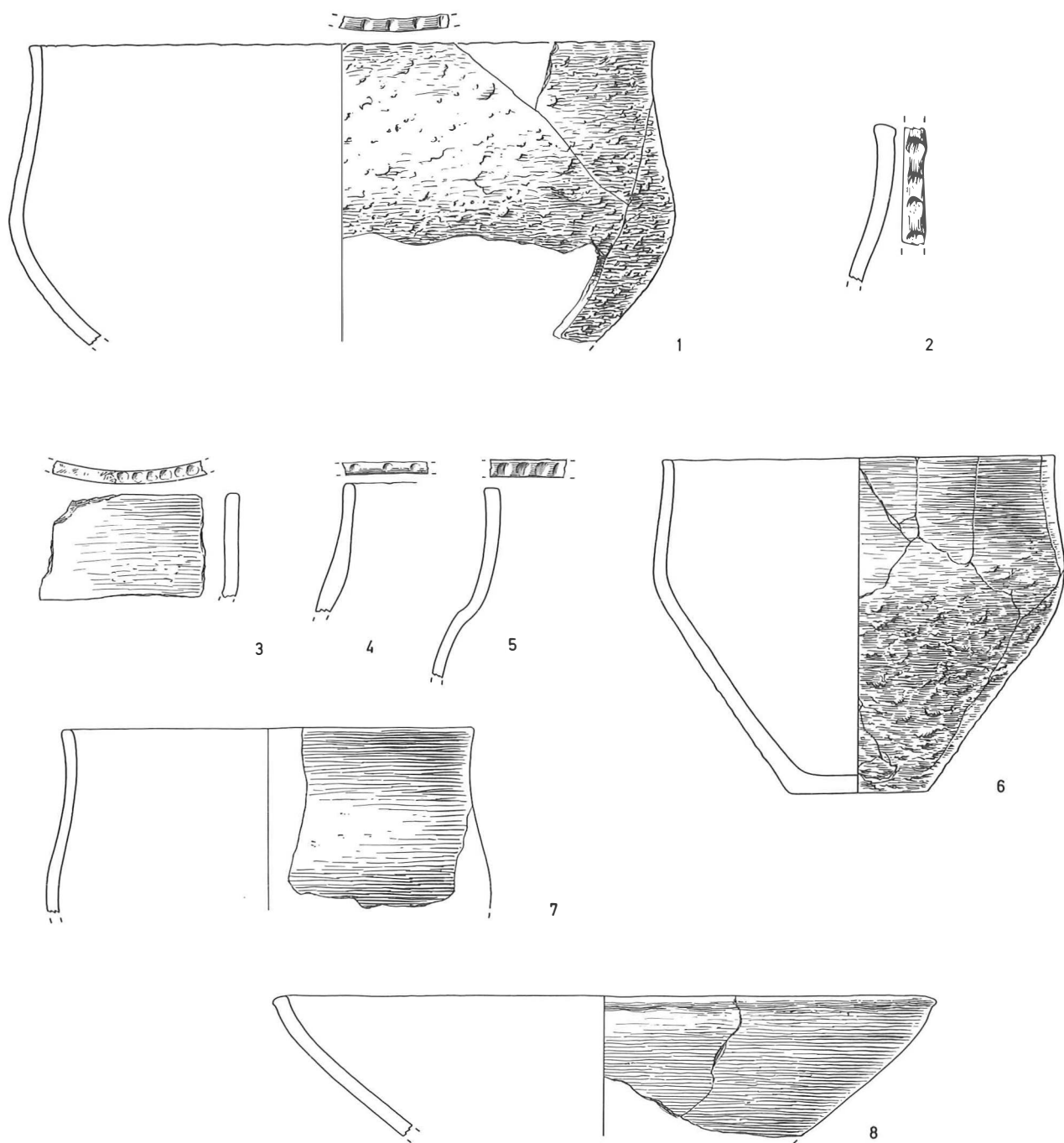


Fig. 65. Rhee: various pottery finds of bucket-shaped pots of Harpstedt type (1-7, 9) and flat bowl (8). 1: 1938 III 106; 2: 1935 V 43; 3: 1935 V 14; 4: 1938 III 108; 5: ?; 6: 1935 V 55; 7: 1935 V 1; 8: 1937 V 101.

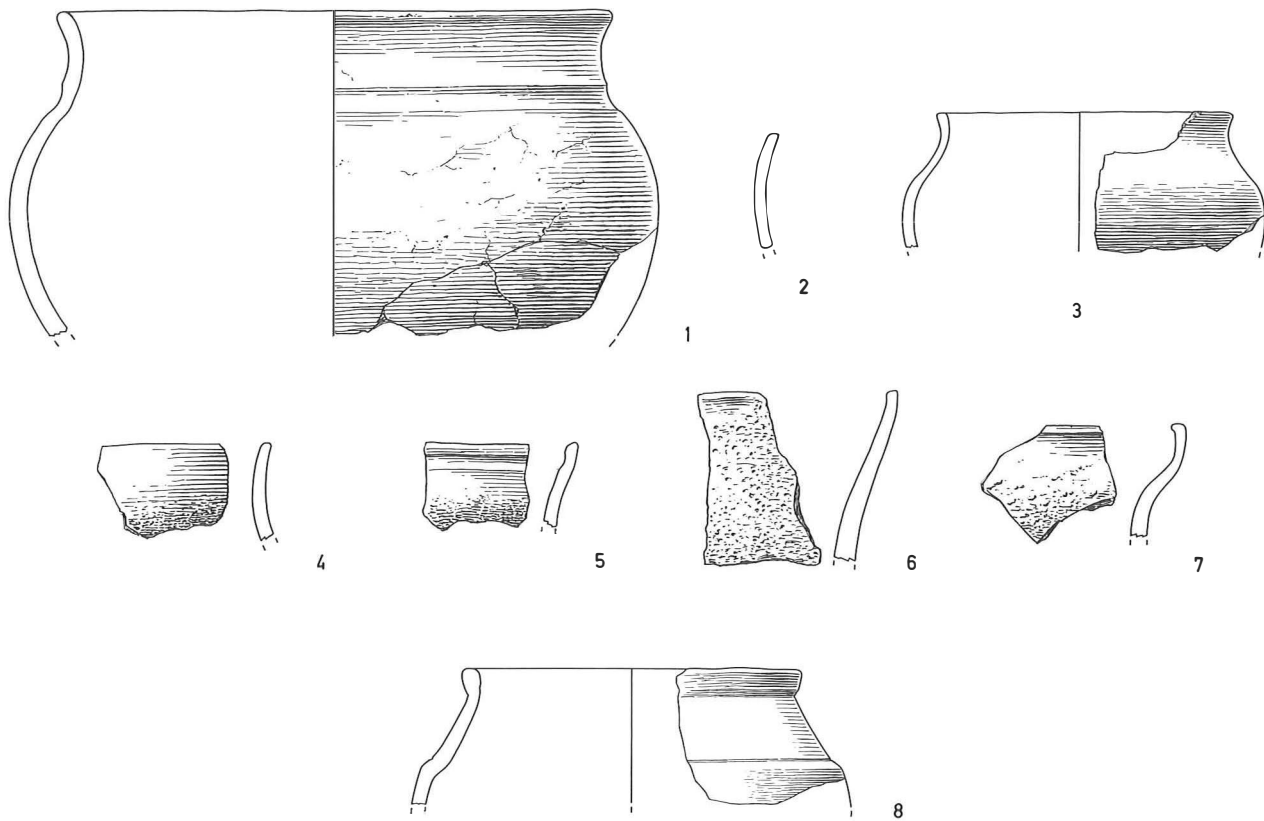


Fig. 66. Rhee: find complex 1937 V 89 (1-7) and stray find 1935 V 49 (8). Nos. 1, 3, 8 of RW II type.

The only find complex which may represent the period of the enclosures is illustrated on fig. 69. It was discovered in 1943 on the terrain of the settlement, but the exact provenance is unknown. It contains a nearly complete RW IV pot with sunken shoulder and *streepband* ornament, as well as some PP IV D and PP IV C rims, suggesting a date in the last century B.C.

Finally, one might wonder whether it should be accident that the square enclosures have the same orientation as some of the square ditches of the cemetery and that they are situated SW of barrow II, in the same way as square ditches are situated SW of the barrows I, VI and XI. This constellation suggests a date for the enclosures close to that of the cemetery.

In conclusion, the contemporaneity with the Zeijen I enclosures suggested by the general form and a few details, is confirmed by the above analysis. I suggest a building date for the enclosures 3 and 4 in the 2nd century B.C.

(5) We mentioned already the sunken huts that are cutting through the palisade of the second en-

closure. In the immediate vicinity a building occurs (no. 14) which in all details agrees with the type dominant at the site of Wijster (2nd-5th century A.D.). Together with another building (no. 13) all these structures fit in a rectangular fence system, comparable to such systems at Wijster, Fochtelo and other sites (see fig. 58-60).

Sherds of seven terra sigillata bowls occur in the area SW of the buildings. They date from the end of the 2nd century A.D. to the first half of the 3rd century A.D. (Glasbergen, 1945). Wheel-made terra nigra-like pottery occurs in the same area (fig. 71:1-3). As stated above, it probably dates from the same period. Locally made pottery found in the area is predominantly of types prevailing in the period A.D. 150-250 (Van Es, 1967) (e.g. types W I A, I B, II B, III A). These types are also represented among the stray finds from the site (figs. 70, 71).

A date around A.D. 200 seems, therefore, well documented for this occupation phase. Only those

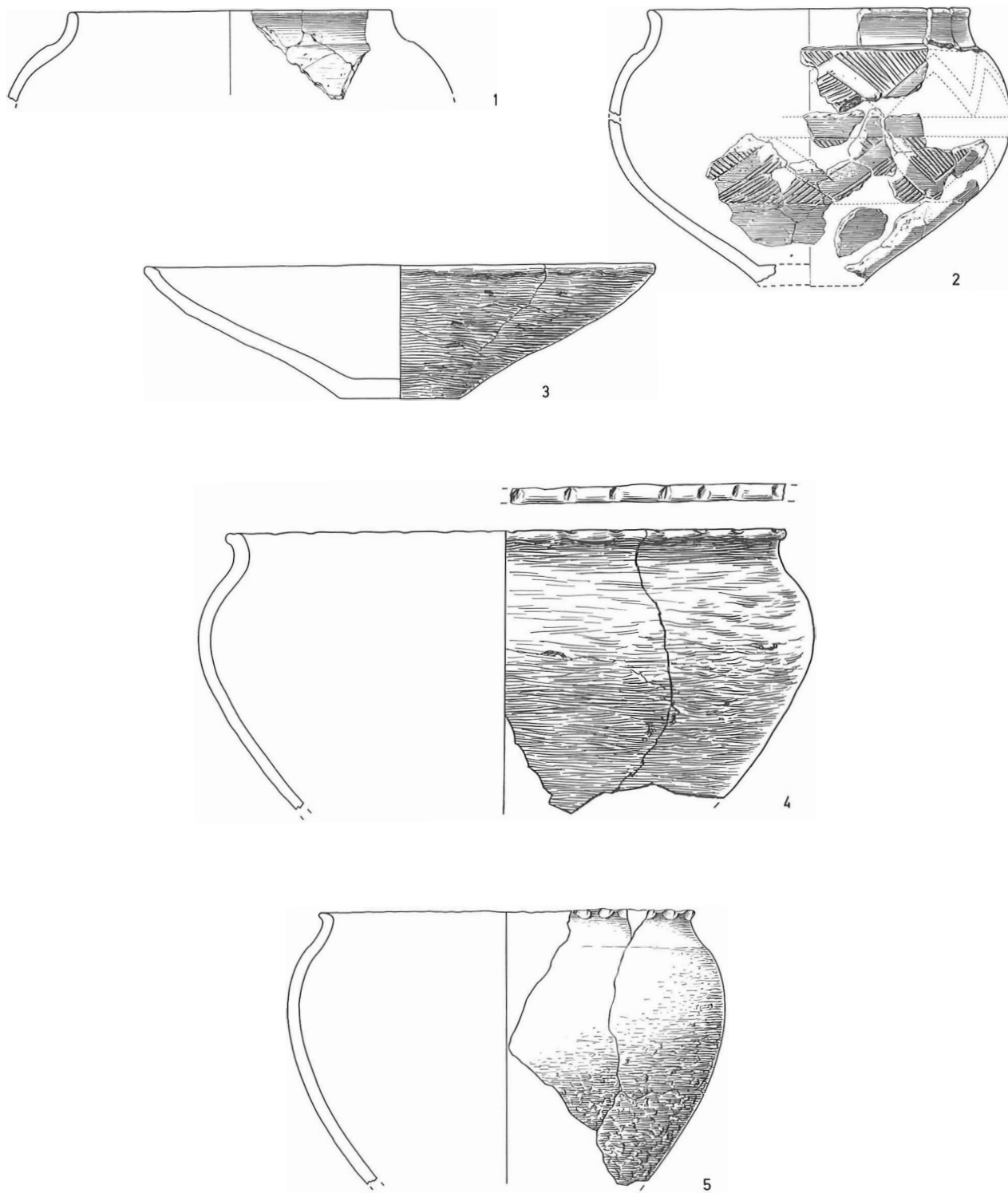


Fig. 67. Rhee: find complex 1938 III 110 (1-3) and stray find 1935 V 49. Nos. 1, 2 and 4 of RW III type.

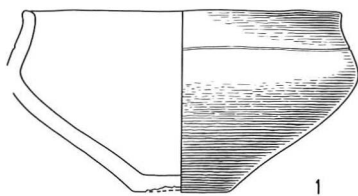


Fig. 68. Rhee: bowl 1935 V 35 from pyre remains of barrow II.

pits have been indicated on the plan (fig. 58) that have yielded finds from the period A.D. 150-250.

It should be noted that one terra sigillata sherd has been reported to occur in one of the pyre barrows but close inspection of the field data makes it highly probable that it was found at the foot of the barrow, the original extension of which was smaller than given by the excavator. An indigenous sherd of Wijster II B2 type was also found in the barrow, but at such a high level that it must have been a later intrusion (fig. 70:6). In any case, the bowl found in the primary grave (find no. 35, fig. 68), is, though not quite easily attributable to one of the RW phases, certainly of Iron Age date (see above, p. 143).

(6) The last occupation phase (fig. 59) at the site dates probably from the 4th to the 5th century A.D. It is represented by an only partly excavated house (no. 15) which shows the feature of two pairs of opposite wall posts, a typical element of the Wijster house type. A post-hole contained a sherd of 4th/5th century "Saxon" pottery. The same pottery type occurs in two pits inside a small rectangular enclosure, as well as in the direct vicinity. Some fences complete the documentation of this phase. Fig. 71:13 is a stray sherd of "Saxon" type from the site.

"Saxon" pottery of the type just mentioned occurs also in the cemetery, situated some 150 meters to the west (Van Giffen, 1937). We shall not deal with this cemetery, which probably remained in use up to the Carolingian period.

It is doubtful whether the present hamlet of Rhee is the continuation of the Carolingian settlement. Though it had the status of an independent village (*marke*), its territory is very small and completely within the territory of the neighbouring village of Zeijen. This unusual situation would rather suggest that the territory of Rhee was once part of that of Zeijen. In other village territories, too,

small hamlets have split off in the course of the historic period, to obtain an independent status as *marke*. Perhaps increasing wetness of the area due to the bad drainage and the expansion of raised bogs on the plateau brought the Early Medieval settlement to an end, or reduced it to a hamlet of secondary importance.

In the three successive short reports on his excavations, Van Giffen (1937; 1938; 1940) did not go into detail as to the sequence of habitation phases at the site. In his summary paper on the prehistory of Drenthe (Van Giffen, 1943) he speaks of the habitation phases at Rhee as difficult to separate from each other. From his writings one gets the impression that he considers the site to have been continuously occupied from the 2nd to the 5th century A.D. As has been stated before, we would suggest an earlier beginning (in the second or last century B.C.), with interruptions in the occupation around A.D. 100 and A.D. 300.

We mentioned already the fact that Van Giffen was probably wrong in attributing one of the barrows, with the terra sigillata find, to the 3rd-4th century A.D.

As to the rectangular enclosures, he saw the parallel with the enclosures he had excavated shortly before at Zeijen (I) and mentions that he was not sure about the former existence of a wall in combination with the palisades.

When describing Zeijen II in 1950, Van Giffen compares in his conclusion that site with the fortified settlements of Zeijen (I) and Rhee! The idea that Rhee, too, was some sort of fortification had apparently not left his mind.

In his work on Wijster, Van Es has used the Rhee pottery for comparison. We have reused here many of his drawings – also some which he left unpublished – but want to emphasize that we do not pretend to have given a complete presentation of the Rhee finds.

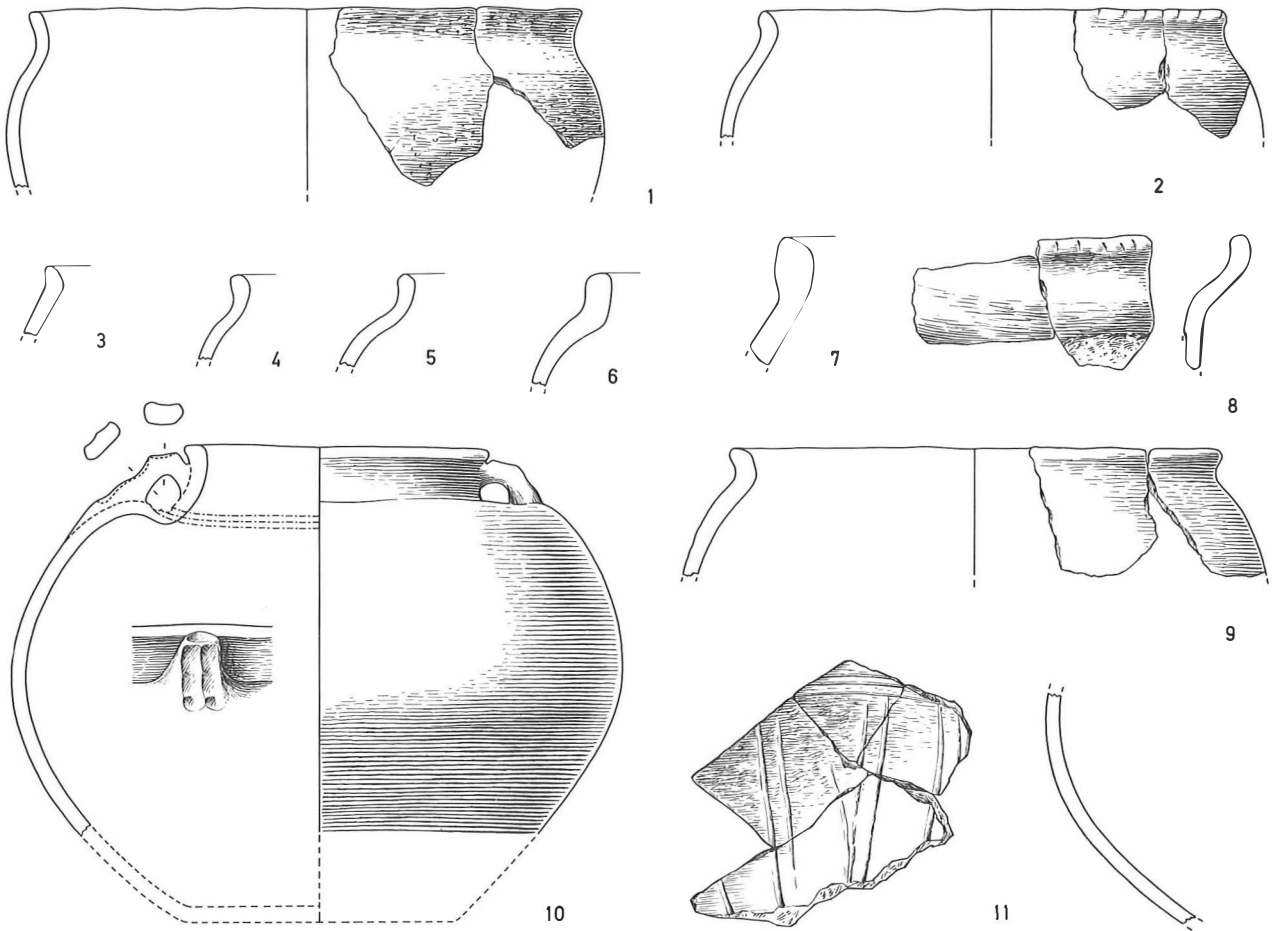


Fig. 69. Rhee: pottery sherds collected in 1943 at the site of the settlement, exact location unknown. Types include RW III (2), RW IV (10), PP IV C (1, 2, 9) and PP IV D (6, 7).

7. DISCUSSION OF THE WALLED ENCLOSURES

7.1. Summary of the evidence

All in all we have evidence in the three areas examined for 9 walled structures, viz.

at Zeijen: Zeijen I-2, Zeijen I-3a, Zeijen I-3b, Zeijen II;

at Vries: Vries-2, Vries-3a, Vries-3b;

at Rhee: Rhee-3, Rhee-4.

In each of the areas they succeed each other in the order indicated. As far as the present dating evidence goes, they were in use between c. 350 B.C. (the date for the beginning RW III ware) and c. A.D. 100 (the terminus ante quem obtained at Rhee), but their actual date was probably limited to a much shorter time range, say 200 B.C.-A.D. 50 (Middle to Late Latène).

Typical features are:

- a square, rectangular or rounded-rectangular wall of earth or sods with an outer palisade revetment and in most cases an inner palisade face as well (direct evidence for the latter only lacking at Rhee-4);
- Two, three or four entrances, both narrow (0.8 to 0.9 m) and wide (2 to 3 m), often with gates, situated in about the middle of the sides of the rectangle (two entrances in one side at Zeijen II-2, Vries-3a, Vries-3b and Rhee-4, the situation at Rhee-3 being unclear);
- one to six palisades outside the wall (only with the later camps Zeijen I-3b, Zeijen II-2, Vries-3a, Vries-3b);

- fragmentary ditches outside the wall (at Zeijen I-2, Zeijen II-2, Vries-2);
- the presence of granaries and/or large barns, that differ from normal houses; these structures preferably being placed along the walls or in the center of the enclosures;
- the presence of Late Bronze Age and/or Early Iron Age fields, houses and/or pits at the sites;
- the use of the sites for normal settlements or fields after the structures lost their original function;
- the presence of a pyre barrow cemetery in the vicinity;
- the presence of rotary querns, potsherds, etc. pointing to normal domestic activities.

As a common denominator one might say that the structures are small fortified enclosures, serving for stocking of cattle and harvest products and, at least temporarily, for normal domestic activities.

7.2. Parallels

None of the other settlement excavations in the North of the Netherlands has given evidence for walled enclosures from the late prehistoric period. Such evidence is lacking too on the adjacent North German plain, with the notable exception of two hillforts near Bremerhaven, the *Heidenschanze* and the *Heidenstadt*.

The *Heidenschanze* was partly excavated in 1958 (Haarnagel, 1965). The defenses consist of bank and ditch, locally doubled. They enclose an area of 10 ha, within which a central area of 2 ha is separately enclosed by a bank and ditch. It was built c. 50 B.C. and twice (locally three times) renewed within a relatively short time.

The main part of the defense was a dense line of vertical posts (palisade), placed in a foundation trench and being the front of an earthen wall. About 1.80 m behind the palisade the earthen wall was kept in place by a line of more widely spaced posts connected by horizontally placed planks. Thanks to peat formation the wood was locally preserved. Haarnagel speaks of a *Holz-Erde-Mauer*.

The enclosure was inhabited. Settlement traces were particularly clear behind the wall. The central area was less densely occupied. As to the interpretation of the fort, Haarnagel concludes (translation by the author):

“The situation of the *Heidenschanze* at a junction of a land and a water route and at a ford is not in agreement with the interpretation of the *Heidenschanze* as a refuge for the people of the surrounding villages. It was not hidden in inaccessible country, but everyone unfamiliar with the landscape would be directed to it by the roads. As a strong fort for its time the *Heidenschanze* rather controlled these roads. Its inhabitants controlled the trade along the land route into the inner parts of the country and on the sea route towards the settlement centers along the North Sea coast. The fortification gave protection to the tradesmen. Here they could staple their ware and offer it for exchange to the immediate and further surroundings. The *Heidenschanze* could have been a fortified market, which was the center for the people of the country and in which they met and exchanged their products.”

In a later publication (Haarnagel, 1969), the excavator mentions the possibility that the *Heidenschanze* was the seat of a leading family, a *Gaufirst*. The evidence for the *Heidenschanze* is of particular interest since the coastal zone from the lower Weser to the North of the Netherlands forms one cultural area.

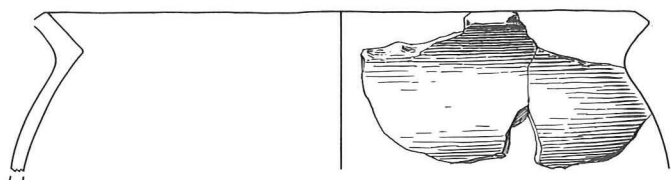
The *Heidenschanze* belongs to the group of Iron Age hillforts occurring in a large area from Britain through France, Belgium, Germany and Poland. In Germany the *Heidenschanze* and *Heidenstadt* occupy an isolated position in the lowland plain; hillforts again occur on the foothills of the *Mittelgebirge* in the Osnabrück-Hannover area. Some of them are situated well north of the northern border of the continuous distribution of such typical “Celtic” remains as coins and turned pottery (see Hachmann, Kossack & Kuhn, 1962).

Recent research in some regions in Britain (Central Wessex) has shown that hillforts develop at already existing foci.

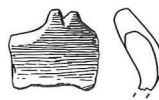
Cunliffe (1974) writes:

“From the fifth century onwards, society began to exhibit an increasing tendency towards aggression brought about, partially at least, by pressure on land resulting from an increase in population. Weapons become more common; the burying of grain in underground silos may reflect the need for safer storage; and most of the settlements replaced their enclosure fences with earthworks, frequently of defensive proportions.

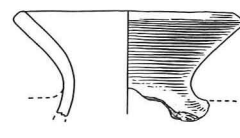
More impressive still is the rapid growth in the number of strongly defended hillforts, which frequently seem to be constructed at already existing foci: some on the sites of causewayed camps, some within earthwork-defined plateaus, some at religious centres, some at the points of convergence of ranch boundaries and some on the sites of rich settlements. While it is at present difficult to be definite as to which type of



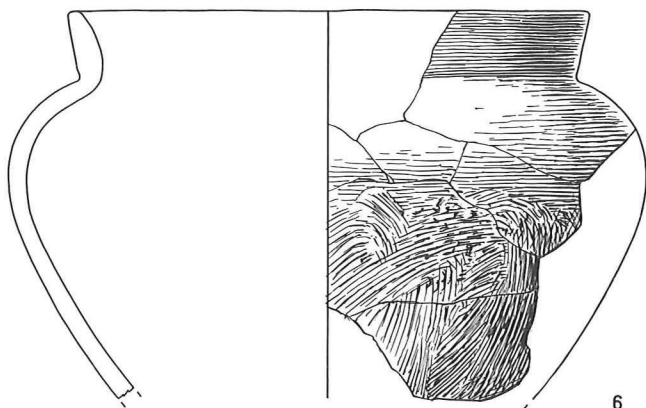
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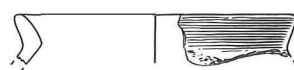
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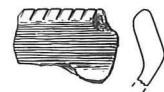
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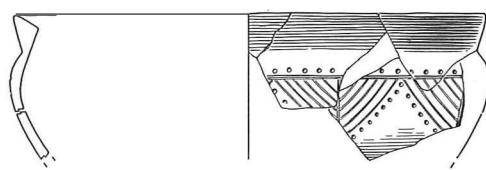
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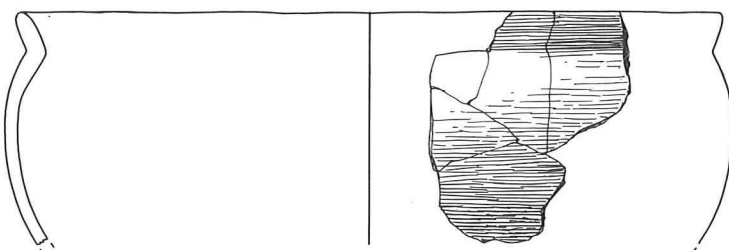
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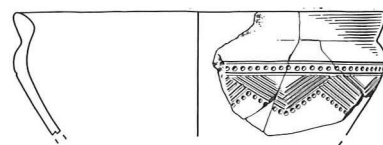
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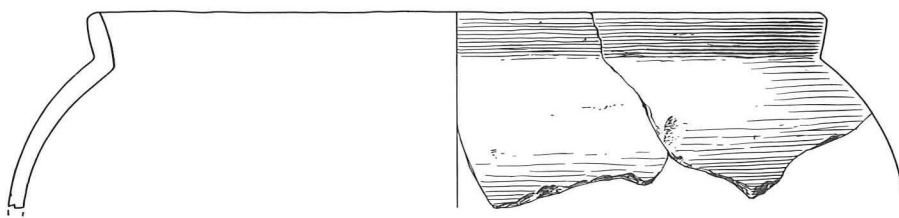
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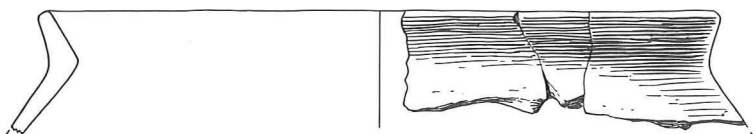
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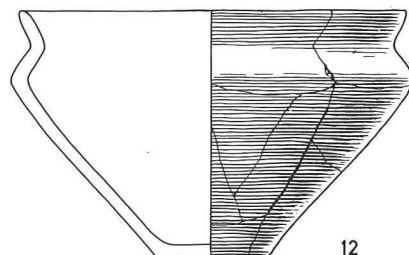
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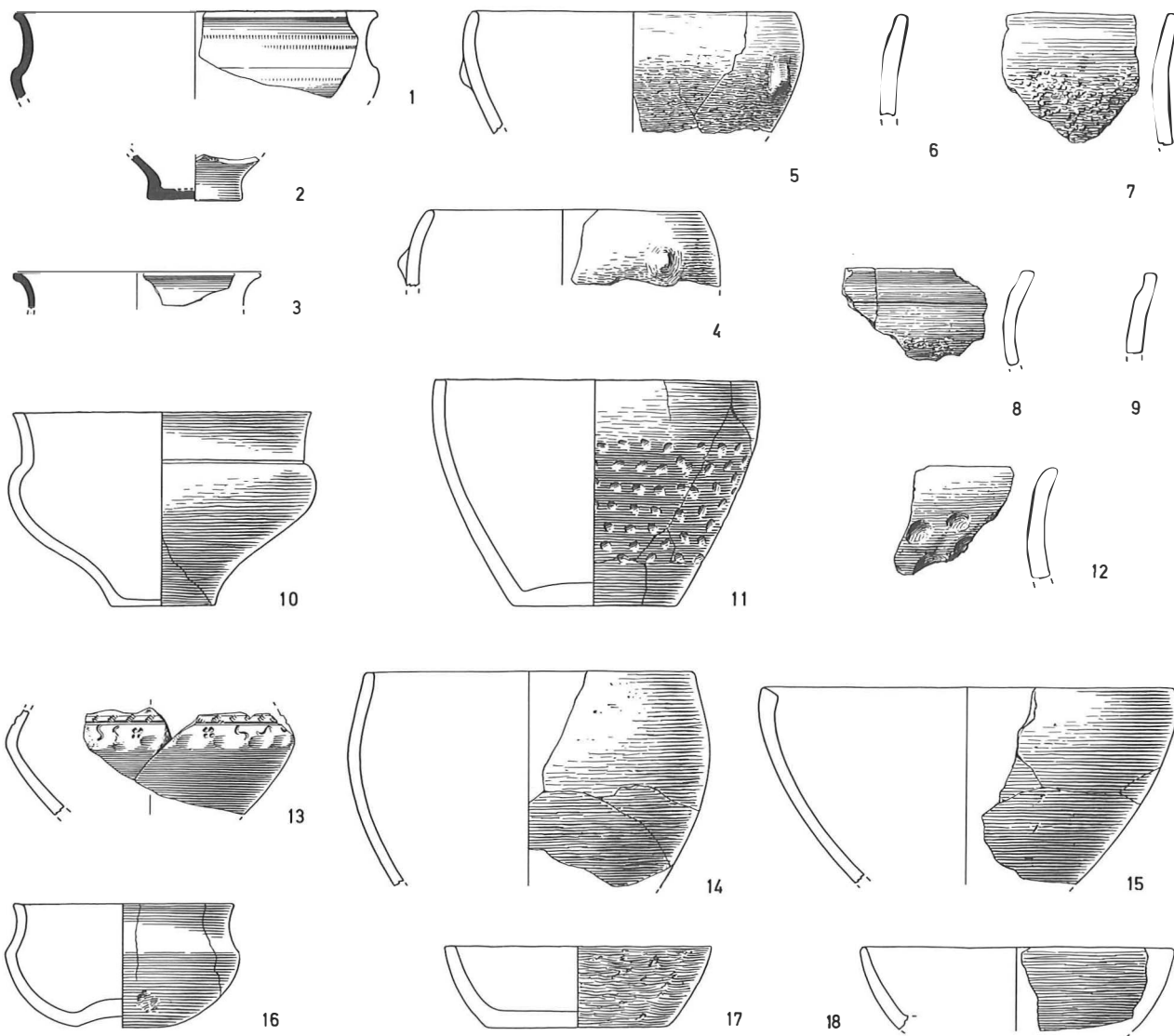
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focus was the most commonly chosen, on the present showing it would appear to be the settlement sites. If, as we have suggested, these represent the homes of an aristocracy, their conversion into forts (as distinct from enclosed homesteads) is a strong indication of the emergence of a warrior leadership with coercive power over, and presumably responsibility for, a group of clans. To begin with, there were many such forts in the south, but gradually certain sites increased their influence at the expense of others, until by late in the second century the landscape was dominated by a smaller number of very strongly defended centres, each commanding an average 30-40 square miles (77-103 km²) of land. The late first millennium, then, saw the focusing of power upon relatively few centres."

Fig. 70. Rhee: pottery sherds of 2nd century A.D. types, including Wijster I A 1 (12), I B 2 (7, 8), II B 2 (2, 5, 6) and II C 2 (1, 9, 11). 1-5: 1935 V 51; 6: 1935 V 42; 7, 9, 12: 1935 V 49; 8: 1935 V 48; 10: 1938 III 116; 11: 1935 V 31 (?).

Fig. 71. Rhee: various pottery finds from the site of 2nd-5th century A.D. types, including terra nigra-like pottery (1-3). 1: 1937 IV 88; 2: 1936 I 69; 3, 4: 1937 IV 98; 5-7: 1937 IV 90; 8, 9: 1937 IV 98; 10: 1935 V 23; 11: 1935 V 36; 12: 1936 I 60; 13: 1935 V 49; 14: 1935 V 7; 15: 1935 V 16; 16: 1935 V 48; 17: 1935 V 38; 18: 1937 V 98.

British hillforts range in size from 0.40 ha to structures covering over 30 ha. The small ones are often considered to be individual fortified homesteads. Excavations have generally concentrated on the entrance and wall structure; little is known about the inner parts.

At Hod Hill (20 ha) the inner space was filled with densely packed circular house remains. At

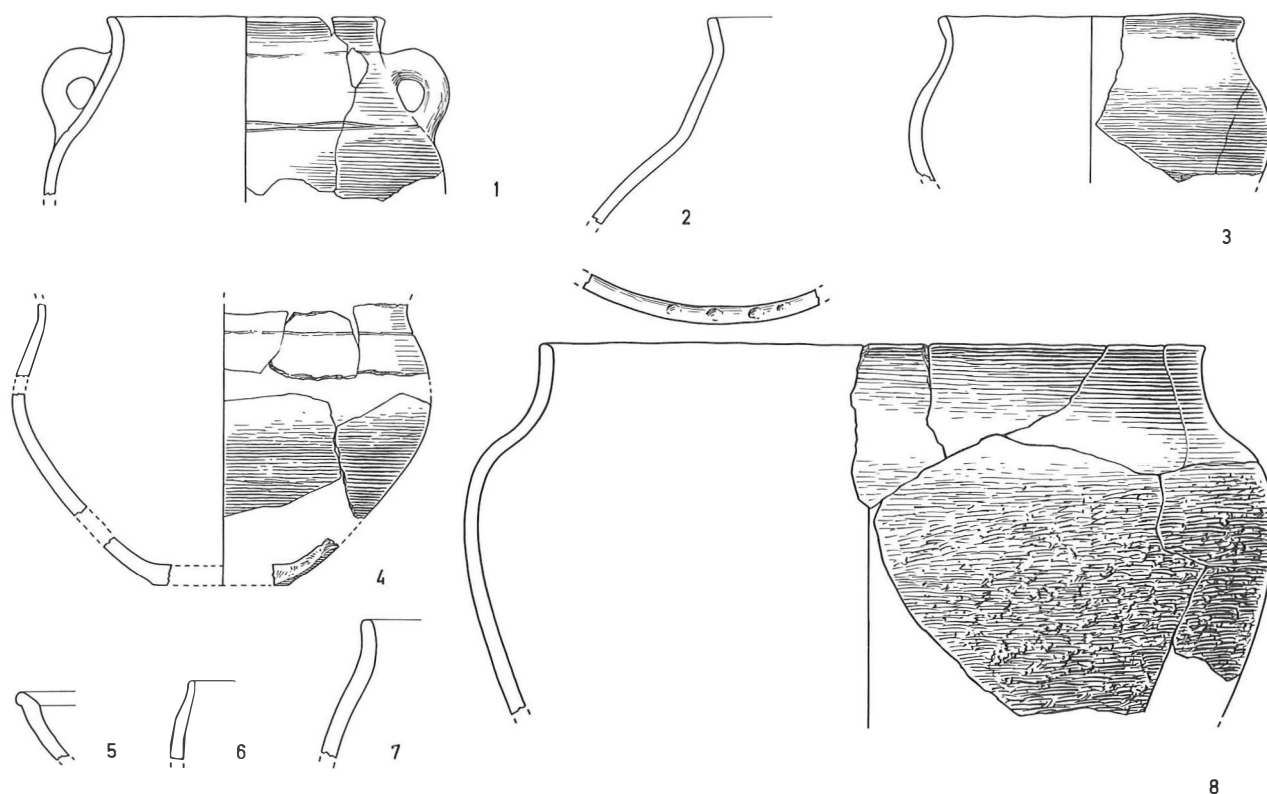


Fig. 72. de Vledders, mun. of Norg. Surface find 1957 XII 89. Nrs. 1-4 of type RW II.

Danebury (5 ha) excavation revealed five rows of rectangular buildings (four- or six-post granaries), separated by streets and backed to areas reserved for storage pits. Such rows recur at three other sites.

Cunliffe has studied the growth of hillforts during the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. He finds that most of them are built on settlement sites of a relatively rich character. Some find their origin in pastoral enclosure, others on range boundaries or religious foci. During the Iron Age some of them grow out to territorial centers for areas with a mean size of 8000-10,000 ha.

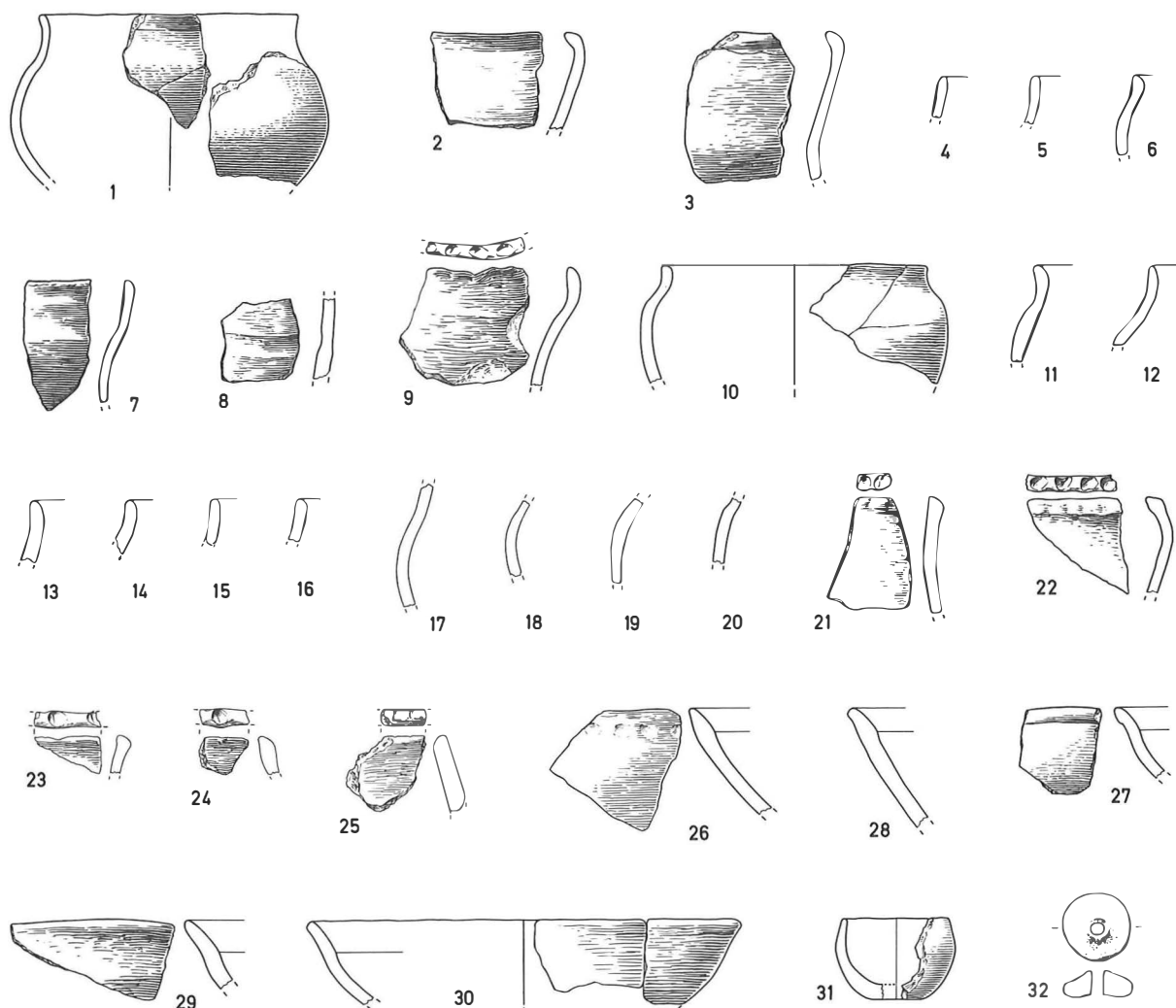
In the course of the Iron Age the defences tend to become more elaborate. Cunliffe attributes the building of hillforts to an upper class of rival chieftains who have accumulated wealth and power, and were no longer in need of producing their own food. The larger hillforts may be either the actual seats of such chieftains where they live and store

their livestock and goods, or settlements of town-like character with markets and industry under their control.

The concept of hillforts as centers of power of rival local leaders could well apply, though on a different scale, to the Drenthe enclosures. These are, of course, of much smaller size and they lack the ditches as part of the defences. On the other hand, the construction of the wall and entrance gates shows many points of agreement. The combination, for example of an outer palisade and an inner line of widely spaced posts as at the *Heidenschanze* is exactly matched at Zeijen I-3a.

For the Drenthe enclosures, too, the idea of a refuge has to be rejected. At Zeijen the western border of the large Celtic field, as well as the line of Bronze Age barrows, indicates an ancient road, which would continue in the direction of Rhee, and further on towards Peelo and the Ballo area (with the largest concentration of Latène cemeteries in Drenthe). It is on or close to this road, the "King's road", that both Zeijen camps as well as the camps from Rhee are situated.

A multiple function, as proposed by Haarnagel,



would well fit the evidence of the Drenthe forts with their granaries, barns and temporary domestic activities.

On some British hillforts buildings have been found that on good grounds can be considered to be wooden shrines or temples.

In two cases (Heathrow and S. Cadbury), they were of rectangular shape and showed great similarity to the later Romano-Celtic temples in the same area.

In our search for possible parallels to the Drenthe enclosures, this brings us to a class of monuments known in the German literature as *spätkeltische Viereckschanze*. They occur in great number in Southern Germany. They are rare in Eastern France but there is another concentration between

Fig. 73. Zeijen-Celtic field. Find complex from culture layer in bank of Celtic field N of Witteveen, coll. 1951 (after Waterbolk, 1977, p. 189). Types include e.g. RW I (12), RW II (1, 2, 3, 7, 8), RW III (10, 11).

the Loire and the Seine in Western France. In Southern Germany the size ranges from 0.16-2.5 ha, the majority being between 0.3 and 1.4 ha. They consist of a square or at least rectangular earth wall, with an entrance gate in the middle of one of the sides.

Schwarz (1960; 1962) has carefully excavated the *Schanze* of Holzhausen. In the first stage there was only a palisade, in the second stage a palisade in combination with an earth wall and ditch, in the

third stage only a bank and a ditch. Inside the *Schanze* three very deep ritual shafts were found, as well as two buildings, each consisting of a rectangle of 6 posts (c. 6×7 m), with an outer line of smaller posts. There were no traces on the site of normal domestic activities. There can be no doubt about the ritual function of the *Schanze*, the shafts and the buildings.

The rectangular shape, the entrance in the middle of the side, the character of the wall and gates strongly remind one of the Zeijen I enclosure and one must therefore reckon with the possibility that the Drenthe enclosures, too, could have had a ritual function, at least in part. The large quantity of domestic refuse is of course an argument against a dominant ritual function. On the other hand, one could point to the two curious central post rectangles in the Vries camp, which remind one in plan of the Holzhausen temples and for which we have not found any parallel in the Netherlands.

As Schwarz has pointed out, a series of phenomena connect the *Viereckschanze* with the square or rectangular ditches surrounding Latène burials of various types, which occur in the Middle Rhine area, in the Marne area, in Yorkshire and, of course, – though not mentioned by Schwarz – in Belgium and the Netherlands and N.W. Germany. In the South of the Netherlands such square ditches often have an opening in one of the sides. At Nijnsel (Hulst, 1964) there is one such monument having two entrances in one side, each corresponding to a post rectangle in the enclosed area. In the North of the Netherlands these ditches are normally closed. There can be no doubt, however, that the square and rectangular ditches find their origin in the Celtic world. In Denmark no square mortuary enclosures have been found; in that country, circular ditches are a common feature of Iron Age urnfields.

The possibility that the rectangular enclosures in Drenthe, besides being places for stocking of cattle and harvest products, had an additional religious function cannot, therefore, be ruled out. The siting of the Rhee and Zeijen II camps – directly adjacent to a barrow group – supports such a view. We mentioned already the curious temple-like post structures at Vries.

We are left with the opposite entrances of the Zeijen I enclosures. To Van Giffen they were a

strong argument to suggest an origin in the Roman military camps. In view of the date of the enclosures this cannot be correct. But we must admit that we have not found a parallel for this feature in the settlement material we have studied.

We can only say that the orthogonal lay-out is a normal feature in Greek towns, and opposite gates do occur. We may therefore assume that this feature, too, has its ultimate source in the Mediterranean world. As long as excavated Latène settlements in the intervening area remain so few in number we cannot prove this point.

8. FINAL REMARKS

The comparison of the Drenthe enclosures with the hillforts, the *Viereckschanzen* and the mortuary enclosures as occurring in adjacent regions present us with so much agreement in formal detail that we cannot see the enclosures as locally developed phenomena. They must have originated under strong influence from the Celtic south and they probably had related functions, adapted to local needs and circumstances.

The idea of territorial centers strongly suggests itself already on the base of fig. 2. Accepting Zeijen II as the successor of Zeijen I, each enclosure is situated in the middle of territories with barrow concentrations, “Celtic fields”, etc., which are separated by natural brook depressions. These territories appear to be of roughly comparable size and even to coincide with those of the historic villages in the area. Further support for the coincidence of present village territories with those from the Latène period is the observation that there is quite often just one pyre barrow cemetery per present village, and these are normally situated not far from them, often at the opposite side of the village field complex (the *es*). In Northern Drenthe, this applies *e.g.* to the villages of Norg, Tinaarlo, Zeegse, Schipborg, Anlo, Annen, Gasteren and Peelo – all adjacent to Zeijen, Vries and Rhee.

Although wooden buildings occur in all of the investigated enclosures these are either granaries (or, in one case, perhaps shrines) or long barns, which lack the characteristic features of normal long houses with clearly separate living and stable parts. Apparently the enclosures were not normal homesteads.

On the other hand, there is at the sites of Zeijen I and Vries enough domestic refuse (pottery and a few quernstones) to suggest that household activities, such as food preparation, were carried out, at least temporarily.

The structure of the walls, being a combination of palisades, planks and earth, falls within the variability of the structure of the walls of the hillforts and the *Viereckschanzen*. But the outer palisades, occurring so typically with the youngest phases at Zeijen and Vries, remain without parallel. We may, however, recall the observation that an increase with time of the strength of the fortification is a typical feature of British hillforts. The multivallate type is restricted to the Late Iron Age.

The rectangular or even square form of the enclosures and the entrance in the middle of one of the sides are features which occur again in the mortuary enclosures. These features suggest a possible additional religious function of the camps. For such a function the siting of the camps of Zeijen II and Rhee, as well as the shrine-like structures at Vries, are further arguments.

The rarity of the Drenthe enclosures may be partly caused by the general reduction of the population density, as witnessed by the decrease of pottery finds from advanced stages of the Iron Age in comparison with the early stages.

In his work on Reuvers' field observations in Drenthe in 1933, Brongers (1973) cites eight earthworks of what he, rather unfortunately, calls the "Vries" type. Most of them, however, are not convincing as possible parallels for the camps under discussion. Those from Wijster are far too small, the one from Ballo lacks actual walls. But those of Exlo, Odoorn and Emmen may well be enclosures, comparable to those at Zeijen, Rhee and Vries. It would be important to localize them and to test them, if possible, by excavation.

Another indication that the enclosures have always been rare in the area is given by the fact that air photographs have so far not given any evidence for them. Small fragments of Celtic fields, on the other hand, have been identified by Brongers in great number.

If, as I have suggested, there was originally one (or perhaps two successive) enclosures per village territory, many will certainly have been lost. Some may, like the one at Vries, lie under the *Plaggenboden*

cover of the present *es* fields close to the villages, others may have been destroyed by sand dune formation, again others may have become invisible through deep ploughing, afforestation or modern house building.

A weak point in our argument is that we know so little about the normal type of settlement in the period of the camps. The excavation of the site of Hijken has presented us with a number of stray houses, irregularly spaced over a Celtic field. They date, however, from an earlier part of the Iron Age and precede the enclosures. Roughly contemporary with them is the site of Noord Barge, where a group of some 30 farms were found, covering at most three centuries. In a late stage six of them were arranged at equal distances parallel to each other, and, at least temporarily, surrounded by a rectangular fence. There is in this case no reason to believe that the fence was the palisade part of a defensive earth wall. The situation was, however, not unlike that at Rhee. It warns us that the settlement of Rhee might, after all, be of normal character.

At Zeijen I the last stage of the occupation (phase 4) was formed by a fence, within which some parallel buildings occurred. We suggested that this phase could be contemporary with the Zeijen II camp. Parallel buildings within one fence have also been found, though a few centuries later, at Flögelin and Wijster.

As far as the evidence goes, one might therefore suppose that in the early part of the period of the enclosures the normal houses of the communities were still loosely strayed over the Celtic field, and that in the later part, towards the beginning of our era, they tended to become concentrated in villages with some sort of organisation. The Wijster excavations show us the further development of such a village in the 2nd-5th century A.D.

If this view is correct, one might see a relation between the forming of such nucleated villages and the walled enclosures. Both would indicate the presence of local power, which could impose a more rigorous organisation on the settlement. Some sort of community organisation must, of course, have already existed long before. It is shown by the regular lay-out and the continuity in the use of burial grounds and cultivated fields throughout the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age.

Of course, nucleated villages occur already in the Early Iron Age occupation of the river and sea marshes. In these regions the frequent inundations and other environmental draw-backs more or less forced the people to live close together and to make common efforts in building mounds, digging drainage ditches and the like. The nucleated *terp* settlements can be understood as a primary environmental adaptation. Their organisation might, however, have acted as an example for the communities in the *Hinterland*.

In his excavations of the Feddersen Wierde, Haarnagel (1969a) was able to bring ample documentation for the gradual growth of the home-stead of an apparently leading family in the village, commanding trade and industry, and exerting political and possibly religious power over the villagers. Though just a little later, *i.e.* in the first centuries A.D., we have here an archaeological documentation for the same social and economical process which we postulate for the Iron Age communities in Drenthe.

The *Heidenschanze*, situated in the Pleistocene *Hinterland* of the Feddersen Wierde, shows that, at a regional level, such a differentiation had already taken place in the Late Iron Age. To Haarnagel this hillfort would be the seat of a princely family, a *Gaufürst*, who controlled the main roads in the area and to whom the local leaders were subjected.

In this hypothesis, Haarnagel is in line with the views of Cunliffe on the nature of the Iron Age society in Britain. Cunliffe is of the opinion that in the course of the Iron Age the development took place of an upper class of rival families that accumulated personal wealth and exerted power over the lower classes of the society. His view is supported by the descriptions of Caesar.

Combining elements from the views of both authors, one could not only postulate the presence of one walled enclosure per ancient village in the Central Drenthe area, but also of one or more centers of regional importance. In this respect one might think of the Rolde/Ballo area, where the concentration of Iron Age cemeteries is densest, and to which the "King's road" is actually leading.

In this connection it is of interest that in the historic period this area has been a major center of

both jurisdiction, government and religious organisation. The members of the highest court in Drenthe, the *Etstael*, were sworn in the Ballerkuil, a still existing deep, roughly circular depression with a diameter of c. 25 meters surrounded by earthen banks about 4 meters high. As far as I know, there has never been an excavation to test the possibility that the depression and the banks are not natural aeolian phenomena, which they would seem to be at first glance, but, perhaps in part, man-made structures. The Ballerkuil is situated half-way between the villages of Rolde and Ballo.

One of the traditional open-air meeting places of the Drenthe government was in the Groller Holt, a former forest at Grollo, 5 km south of Rolde. Unfortunately, the actual location of the meeting place has been lost. The same applies to another ancient open-air meeting place on the Bisschopsberg, the "Bishop's Hill", near Havelte. On this hill a number of pyre cemeteries occur, as well as the find place of the two rich Latène finds we mentioned on p. 000. Finally we can mention that the present capital town of the province of Drenthe, Assen, goes back to a Medieval monastery, situated 7 km west of Rolde.

The local farmers of Zeijen were still able to tell Van Giffen that the enclosure at the Witteveen was "the" ancient camp, which implied that they had some vague knowledge of its original importance. Conversely, it might well be that some of the ancient historical centers of regional organisation in matters of jurisdiction, government and religion were already of regional importance in the late pre-historic period. In the Ballo/Rolde and Havelte areas the coincidence of indications for their relative importance in the Iron Age with the seats of ancient historical institutions is certainly of interest in this respect.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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