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# Massive dump ramparts and ditching of Fécamp type in Britain: a review

Ian Ralston

## Introduction

The recognition of particularly massive dump ramparts with accompanying ditching as a noteworthy feature of late Iron Age fortification has evolved considerably since Sir Mortimer Wheeler's pioneering work in Normandy in the late 1930s (Wheeler, Richardson 1957). Such major dump ramparts, their general distribution recently mapped, are a feature of later prehistoric enclosure both in Britain and the nearer continent (Cunliffe 2018, map 26).

Here, focus is on the Fécamp type, named following Wheeler's excavation of the Camp du Canada in that *commune* (Seine-Maritime). Its key characteristics are a massive dump bank, seemingly lacking internal structural features, with an external glacis set beside a wide, shallow, flat-bottomed ditch, often without an intervening berm. The bank may display a stone capping and is assumed to have had a timber breastwork; a counter-scarp bank may be present. The Wheeler expedition recognized several examples, two of which were partially examined by the spade: the Camp du Canada and, more superficially, Duclair in the same *département*. The conclusions reached regarding the latter are an instance of *celeritas Wheeleriana* (Frere 1983, p. 1) – his desire speedily to arrive at significant outcomes following – in this case slight – fieldwork. The imminence of war, however, is a mitigating factor in this case.

In interim accounts, Wheeler claimed this type as characteristic of 'the Belgic culture of La Tène III' (1941, p. 268), seemingly restricted to *Gallia Belgica*; a view restated in the definitive publication (Wheeler, Richardson 1957). Duval's influential review (1959) named these earthworks the *type belge*, thereby reinforcing the assumed chronological, cultural and geographical model. A usual explanation for this particular combination of bank and ditch is its suitability in the face of Roman assault employing siege machinery. By no means all Iron Age massive ramparts – broadly those circa 7 m or more in height – however display the classic Fécamp specification, with diagnostic wide, flat-bottomed ditch.

## Southern Britain

A key motive behind Wheeler's French campaigns was to seek similarities between hillforts in southern England and those across the Channel (Wheeler 1939). First century BC Belgic links had long been identified with southern Britain, intimated by historical, artefactual and numismatic evidence. Cross-Channel comparisons were central to the spirit of the prevailing model, which preceded Clark's critique (1966) and the downplaying of inward migration to explain British Iron Age developments. If fewer close parallels than anticipated were noted, instances of seemingly Fécamp-type works in southern Britain were brought forward almost immediately. The first was already under excavation in 1938 at Oldbury, Kent, contemporary with the Normandy expedition. Based on an interim report (Ward-Perkins 1940), the comparison was made directly by Wheeler (1941). Ward-Perkins' fuller account (1944) underscored the assumed continental linkage.

Oldbury [3774]<sup>1</sup> encloses circa 50 ha. In Wheeler's 1957 synthesis, it was already firmly established as the best English parallel for the Fécamp series. Its combination of a 'similar flat ditch and abnormally high rampart, the latter with an external stone cresting as at Duclair' (Wheeler, Richardson 1957, p. 12) had been mapped – as the 'Oldbury type' – by Ward-Perkins (1944, fig. 4) alongside the French examples east of the lower Seine.

Located on a greensand ridge near the North Downs, Oldbury is univallate, except where the bank is absent due to the hill's natural strength, or subsequent quarrying. Excavation adjacent to the NE gate provided a stratified earthwork sequence. Its second phase, believed to date closely to the AD 43 invasion, was taken to represent the sought-for broad shallow ditch with accompanying dump bank. The bank was remodelled, the original ditch infilled and replaced with a broad, flat-bottomed one, with a steep outer edge. Heightened and crowned by a

<sup>1</sup> Four-digit numbers in square brackets are the site reference number in the online *Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland*, from which further details can be obtained. It can be accessed at: <https://hillforts.arch.ox.ac.uk/>.

post-hole (perhaps indicative of a palisade), this bank had a revetting wall some 3 m in front, an arrangement which Wheeler (1941) paralleled at Duclair. Further stonework, possibly tumbled from rampart capping, lay downslope into the ditch. In this were 40 sling-stones, otherwise found widely across the site (Ward Perkins 1940). The surface of a low counterscarp bank contained negative features, interpreted as components of subsidiary defences, and cremation burials in indigenous pedestal jars of the later first century AD. These defences lay beside the realigned gateway, the firing of which was indicated by a burnt gatepost and fire-reddened road metalling. Pottery from this phase 2 bank was described as Belgic, unlike that associated with the earlier defence, then attributed to the local Wealden culture established in the Early Iron Age.

These details emphasize the search for similarities to the 'uniform and easily recognizable series {of hillforts} with strongly inturned entrances' (Ward-Perkins 1944, p. 139) which Wheeler had identified in Seine-Maritime. Despite the difference in date between the mid-first century BC French series – although Wheeler (1941) had noted post-Conquest use of Fécamp – and that – approximately a century later – of the Oldbury rampart rebuild, as well as its gate's lack of inturns, Ward-Perkins was convinced that the flat-bottomed ditch and superficial fighting platform left '...no doubt as to the ultimate ancestry' (1944, p. 141) of Oldbury II in the continental Fécamp series. No interest was then shown in the scale difference between the Oldbury defences and those of (say) Camp du Canada, the similarities in form and ditch profile carrying the argument. The general conception of the earthworks advocated a Fécamp derivation, despite their lesser scale. The Oldbury rampart was however to be re-examined in the 1980s (Thompson 1986) and comprehensively reinterpreted, but until then it was the classic Fécamp case.

By 1941, Wheeler conceded that 'the great development of earthwork construction which characterizes [southern] ... England in the last two or three centuries BC' which he considered 'the fine flower of British Iron Age fortification' (1941, p. 269) had occurred largely independently of continental architectural practices. He remained keen however to seek continental influences from the Fécamp series in other major insular earthworks considered as Belgic creations. Although he accepted that certain features – more particularly the wide, flat-bottomed ditch – were absent in the English cases, he hypothesised that a high rampart fronted by a counterscarp bank as at Wheathamstead and the Beech Bottom dyke, St Albans (both Hertfordshire), regardless of ditch profile, provided further potentially significant comparators. Since these initial comparisons were advanced, further English hillforts or *oppida* with more-or-less convincing Fécamp-type earthworks have been proposed, some making their way into the cartography of Iron Age fortification. This evidence requires critical review.

There are undoubtedly major dump ramparts, although not it seems Fécamp ditching, associated with both English series of embanked *oppida* – the 'enclosed' and 'territorial' types as

recently reviewed (Historic England 2018; Garland 2017). Given that their chronology extends well into the first century AD, it is however appropriate first to consider major banks at other southern British hillforts.

Ramparts of dump construction, although of more modest dimensions, are well-established much earlier in British hillfort architecture; instances are noted from the mid-first millennium BC. At Croft Ambrey [Herefordshire: 0012], the dump rampart of the main camp, fronted by a V-shape ditch, was progressively transformed during the Middle Iron Age to attain 5.5m in height, its summit some 12.2 m above the ditch bottom (Stanford 1974, p. 43). At Rainsborough Camp [Northamptonshire: 0778], the inner bank was remodelled as a sizeable dump rampart overlying an earlier stepped wall with internal timberwork, probably no later than the second century BC (Avery *et al.* 1967). Avery and colleagues persuasively demonstrated (*ibid.* 251-252) that dump ramparts as an engineering solution were not a late import from the Continent, albeit they then thought Fécamp-configuration examples (as at Oldbury II) could still be so considered.

Fécamp-type works identified in Britain would thus be a subset of the major unretained dump ramparts known here. Such glacis constructions were comprehensively studied by Avery (1993, ch. 9). He (1993, p. 53; tab. 9a) identified a small series he termed 'Extra High Dumps', plainly fortifications of interest in the search for Fécamp types. 'Extra High Dumps' attain approximately 7 m, for widths that generally exceed 20 m; characteristically however numbers of them form parts of multivallate systems, as at Maiden Castle [Dorset: 3598]. Many also have markedly V-shaped ditches; all of Avery's 'Extra High Dumps' lack ditches matching the Fécamp canal-like configuration. Their distribution is focussed on the classic Southern British hillfort zone, from south-central England to the Welsh Marches. Almost all Avery's examples (1993, tab. 9a) are refurbishments of earlier, smaller dumps or, less commonly, wall-and-fill fortifications; they are postulated to belong late in the pre-Roman Iron Age (Fig. 1).

After the initial interest during the 1940s, a review of hillforts taken to represent English Fécamp types was provided by Cotton (1961). She presented a brief synthesis of this evidence, contrastingly confined to south-east England, at the Celticum conference at Châteaumeillant. Oldbury II was still advanced as the best insular example in its modified 'Belgic' form. It continued to be so for a further generation. A subsequent reassessment circa 1969 by Avery (1993, Appendix A, p. 248-253) offered a new interpretation but retained the two-phase sequence. His re-examination of the pottery suggested that the second phase was constructed at the turn of the millennium and was out of use by the Claudian invasion. The ditch was recut to 15 m wide and 1.8 m deep; the material extracted was dumped as a counterscarp, such that this feature resembled Fécamp dimensions reasonably closely, albeit Avery made no such claim. In 1980, Thompson (1986) re-excavated Oldbury. He dismissed the supposed second constructional phase of the rampart as an identifiable entity and rejected its Fécamp credentials. Thompson argued that the wide ditch was part of the initial works, and that the earlier interpretation was

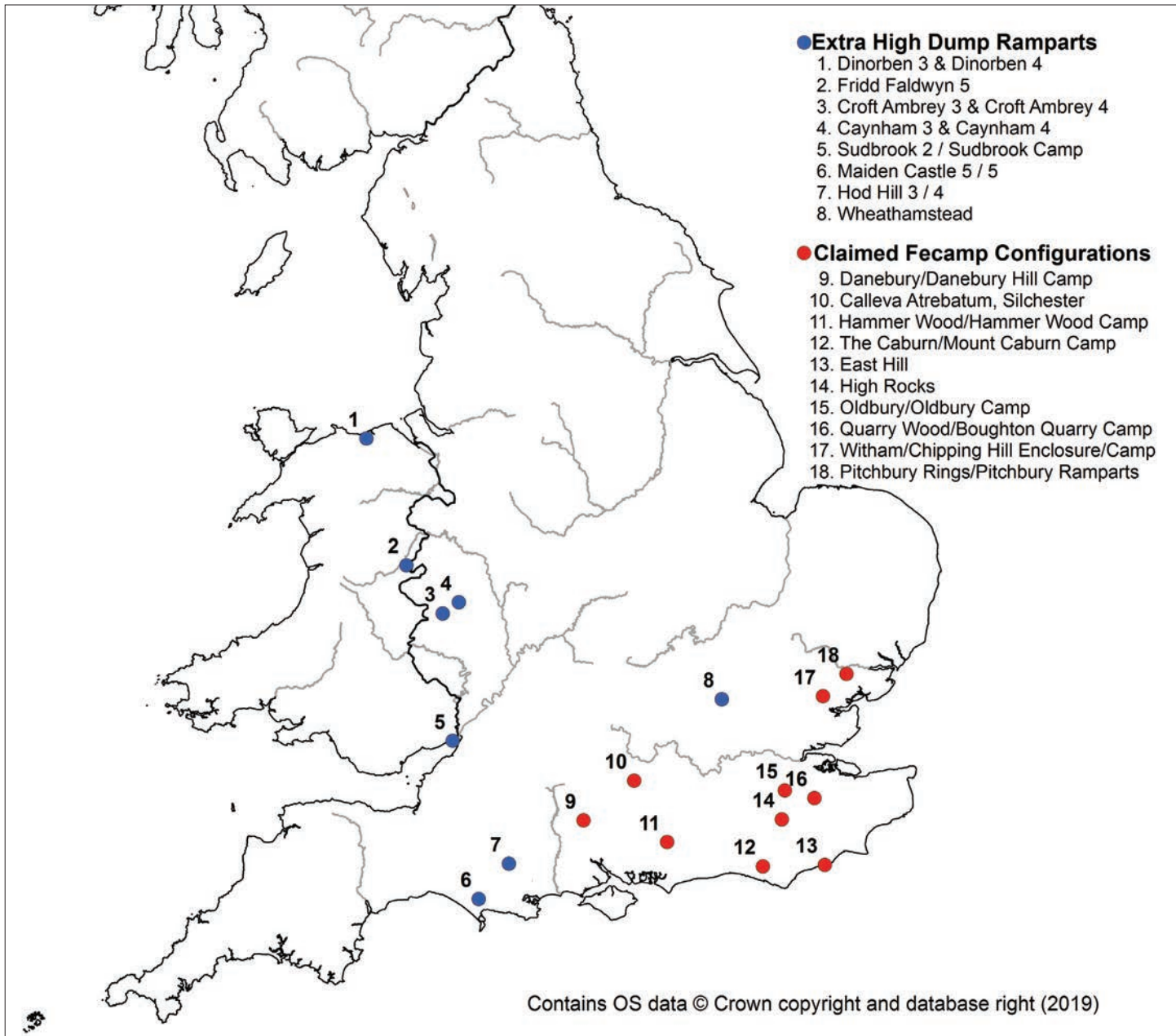


Fig. 1. Massive later prehistoric earthworks in southern Britain: 'Extra High' banks as identified by Avery 1993 (in blue) and works that have been suggested, and mostly rejected, as of Fécamp type (in red). Cartography by Dr Paula Levick.

'based on a mistaken analogy with Wheeler's work ... which exercised a mesmeric influence on excavators ...' (ibid., 286)<sup>2</sup>.

Other cases proposed by Cotton all lay south of the Thames (Fig. 1). At High Rocks [Sussex: 3733], then recently excavated but unpublished, the secondary, internal rampart of a bivallate fort of circa 8ha was put forward as of Fécamp type (Cotton 1961, p. 105; 1960), a view followed by others (Harding 1974, p. 225; Collis, Ralston 1976, fig. 4). Its excavator, Money (1968, p. 165) did indeed make comparisons between Oldbury, the French Fécamp sites, and the inner enclosure at High Rocks. The

main ditch however, whilst locally shallower and wider, was generally only circa 3.3 m wide (Money 1968). A decade later, Green (1979) noted the variability of the High Rocks ditch but, following a perceptive review, dismissed comparisons with the Fécamp series. Avery's assessment (1993, Appendix A, 187-8) comprehensively altered the interpretation of the much-reduced enclosing works at High Rocks, but its ditching was plainly always too slight for consideration in the Fécamp series. Its defences, too, are effectively undated.

Cotton (1961, p. 105; 1960) proposed a Fécamp variant at the Caburn III [Sussex: 3730], where an external bank (albeit not of Fécamp dimensions) was fronted by a ditch described as broad and flat-bottomed, although it is assessed very differently in more recent analyses (Avery, 1993, Appendix A, 67, para. 22;

<sup>2</sup> New surveys and assessment of Kent hillforts including Oldbury and Quarry Wood, Loose by A. Oswald, A. Fitzpatrick and C. Haselgrove will be forthcoming in the *Archaeological Journal*.



Drewett and Hamilton 1999). Avery detailed the likely first millennium AD date of this fortification; and highlighted the considerable differences between these outer works and the standard Fécamp configuration. A further candidate was listed only in Cotton's 1960 paper. This is Hammer Wood [Sussex: 3746]. Here a supposedly secondary modification – an ironstone capping to the bank, which later slipped into the ditch (Boyden 1958) – was regarded as significant. There was then no dating evidence for this site although Hamilton and Gregory (2000, tab. 3) attribute it to the Late Iron Age. Boyden's ditch sections (1958, fig. 2) show clearly that the main ditch was V-shaped. The claim that there was a Fécamp-type ditch here (there are two narrower v-profiled ones) was again comprehensively dismissed by Avery in 1993 (Appendix A, 170, para. 2). Overall, as Cotton (1960, p. 65) had conceded, the purported English Fécamp defences then known to her represented at best distinctly slighter variations and included, for example, partial bivallation, not a feature of the north French examples.

What of English *oppida*, summarily considered in Cotton's treatment (1961)? The comparison for sites such as Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire was with the high bank and V-shaped ditch of Vieux Chalons, considered by Wheeler (Wheeler, Richardson 1957) as transitional between '*oppidum*' and '*urbs*' (Cotton 1961, p. 105-106) and not the standard Fécamp configuration. This had only then been recognized at one English *oppidum*, *Calleva Atrebatum* (Silchester, Hampshire) in an enclosure considered to be of rather later date (perhaps circa AD 25, although initially proposed as a generation later). The innermost fortification line (now substantially destroyed) was claimed to show a wide flat-bottomed ditch and, inferentially, a high bank, recognized in the 1950s in George Boon's excavations (Cotton 1961, p. 105). These, not fully published until later, are discussed below.

In terms of deploying English Fécamp defences in wider interpretations, a significant contribution was by Hawkes (1968, p. 10 with fig. 2(b)). Here Cotton's (1960) four hillforts with claimed Fécamp works were mapped against Wheeler's 1957 distribution in the definition of the area identified by Hawkes as *Belgium*. Still identified exclusively in Sussex and Kent (also Harding 1974, p. 225), Hawkes produced an elaborate explanation for the rarity of true Fécamp style works in southern Britain: he proposed them as a later development from earlier forts, for which he again saw a continental ancestry, enclosed by a smaller dump bank preceded by a V-shaped ditch. In his view, this series endured at least to the Roman Conquest in south-east Britain. The variability in British sites might be attributable to the timing of the arrival of different Belgic groups relative to the development of the full Fécamp specification in Gaul.

In 1969, Boon published his 1950s Silchester excavations, explicitly noting that the Inner Earthwork 'was a defence of Gaulish "Fécamp" type' (1969, p. 1). It defines an area of some 35ha (Truscoe 2017) within the still-upstanding enclosure of the Roman town. Boon excavated its substantial ditch, which had infilled from the mid-first century AD as the accompanying bank was levelled and substantially built over by the developing Roman town. This ditch (Boon's Trench A; pl. VIIA) was originally circa

13.8 m wide with sloping sides and a flat bottom only circa 3 m across, circa 3.6 m below the modern surface. Its form may relate to the gravels through which it was cut; its basal fills, below the water table, were of malodorous mud. Excavation was plainly difficult. Boon hypothesised that the accompanying bank had originally been circa 14m wide, accompanied by a counterscarp bank. Its initial height is unknown; Boon advocated circa 2.4 m as a minimum, from the volume of material extracted from the ditch. This would make it plainly less massive than north-east French examples, but it may have been more substantial. Set astride the Roman road from London to the Severn, and described as 'traditional, Belgic, and un-Roman in style throughout' (Boon 1969, p. 36), the Inner Earthwork was envisaged as '... the work of British allies controlling considerable manpower and enjoying full Roman trust' and placed just after the AD 43 invasion. Fulford (1984) later proposed that it may have been pre-Conquest; Avery (1993, Appendix A, p. 319-320) suggested a generation older. Recent opinion, following reanalysis of Boon's finds, indicates that the Inner Earthwork and its accompanying ditch date at earliest to the end of the first century BC (Creighton, Fry 2016, p. 303-306, fig. 9.2-9.4; p. 363-364). More recent excavation suggests the bank may date to 10 BC at earliest (Fulford 2019).

In an early edition of *Iron Age Communities ...*, Cunliffe (1978, p. 282-283) reviewed the evidence for Fécamp-style defences, here tentatively considered as anti-Roman refurbishments of earlier forts generally attributable to the 40s AD. Key examples remained Cotton's identifications (1960; 1961), excluding Hammer Wood; Boon's Silchester evidence offered support for the mid-first-century AD date. Three further examples were claimed, two lying north of the Thames. Overall the distribution remained south-eastern, apart from Danebury [Hampshire: 3828], where a recut flat-bottomed ditch circa 11m wide bordering the reshaped main bank was then believed to date after circa AD 30. What is also manifest from Cunliffe's schematic sections of the proposed English Fécamp defences (1978, fig. 13:28) is that while their conception – unretained bank fronted by flat-bottomed ditch – mirrors the north-east French sites, the Kent and Sussex examples are very slight in scale, with ramparts less than 2 m high and ditches not exceeding 7m wide.

At this time Collis (1975, p. 21-22) considered English ramparts of glaciis construction in his synthesis of European late la Tène defended sites. He included several as having Fécamp-type defences: the Caburn: (ibid. 210; [Sussex 3730]); Danebury, where the final defence was 'reminiscent of the Fécamp construction' (ibid. 218); and Oldbury (ibid. 226); Silchester was discounted (ibid. 228). Appendix 1 (Collis 1975, p. 233) added High Rocks. Some of these candidates were not long to endure: by the early 1980s, Cunliffe (see below) had discounted the Fécamp attribution of Danebury on stratigraphic grounds.

In the following year, a first wider European distribution map of Fécamp dump ramparts was produced (Collis, Ralston 1976, fig. 4). This included not only the north-east French series, but others which had subsequently been recognized south of the Loire by Hogg (1969, fig. 2) in Poitou and then Ralston and Buchsensschutz (1975) in Berry. Isolated examples east of the Rhine were also noted (cf. Collis 1975). For Britain, only the three

key sites from Oldbury to the Caburn were mapped; and it is these which still remain the sole English examples on the most recent European distribution map (Fichtl 2010, fig. 14). Collis and Ralston (1976) also proposed that dump ramparts (along with hornwork entrances) might represent British influences spreading to the nearer continent, the former because of their apparently longer insular pedigree.

That decade too was marked for the first time by advocacy for Fécamp style earthworks north of the Thames in Essex (Rodwell 1976, p. 191), potentially as early as pre-Caesarian times, as in Gaul. He noted that their core distribution corresponded with that of early Gallo-Belgic coin series (notably A and B), and therefore sought to link the appearance of such fortifications in Britain with 'primary Belgic immigrants'. In all, he mapped nine sites with Fécamp-style defences in the South-East (Rodwell 1976, fig. 5), including two fortifications north of the Thames.

A partially bivallate work of circa 1.9ha, Pitchbury Rings [Essex: 3612] lies above the River Colne seaward of Colchester/*Camulodunum*. Most of its earthworks were substantially reduced in 1840s agricultural improvements. For Rodwell (1976, p. 330), its inner ditch, examined by Cruso in the 1930s, showed two phases; the latter (bordering a dump rampart) was shallow and flat-bottomed, hence the Fécamp denomination. Two excavations at Pitchbury – in 1933 and 1973 – suggest that occupation was slight; both were published by Crummy and Cruso (1995, fig. 6.26). Although distinct horizons were identified in the ditch, the 1933 sections (Crummy, Cruso 1995, fig. 6.27) offer no convincing evidence for a flat-bottomed recut; again this ditch – less than 10m wide at its aperture – is too slight for consideration as a Fécamp type. The 1973 excavation confirmed that the much-reduced rampart was likely to have been of dump construction and that it may have been built or modified in the first century BC. In sum, this small, partly bivallate, contour fort seems to have produced no evidence to substantiate Rodwell's 1976 view of its Fécamp credentials.

Chipping Hill Camp [Essex: 3523: unconfirmed], Witham (Rodwell 1976, p. 331; fig.47) is a bivallate work lying above the River Brain and now largely within the town of Witham (English Heritage 1999). The outer enclosure is circa 10.8ha; the inner circa 3 ha: roughly oval, they are concentric. Chipping Hill has seen piecemeal excavation as a by-product of development: a central concern is whether the earthworks indicate solely an Iron Age site, or whether they are also evidence for the tenth century Anglo-Saxon *burh* established at Witham. Both ditches are seemingly V-shaped, of the order of 10m wide, and at least 3 m deep. The inner seems to have been fully silted up by Saxon times (Pastscape 2019). The small size of the inner contour enclosure and the lack of subsequent evidence for a flat-bottomed ditch here suggest this is unlikely to be a Fécamp configuration work.

Two further sites south of the Thames were proposed in the 1970s as Fécamp candidates. Quarry Wood Camp, Loose ([Kent: 3878] 'Boughton Quarry Camp'), was excavated in the 1960s (Kelly 1971). Its earthworks had been obliterated in part in the nineteenth century, but lengths survive on the east and west sides, on the former accompanied by a ditch. The enclosed area is circa 12 ha. The western bank was sectioned and shown to be

of mixed materials, including turf, but without stone facing or capping. It was single-phase and included a few abraded sherds of Belgic type. The accompanying ditch was only partially sectioned, but that on the east (not apparent on the surface) was more extensively dug. This proved to be circa 9 m wide at the surface, for a maximum depth of circa 2.5 m cut into the underlying limestone rag. Its inner part is a wide V-shape, with a narrow flat bottom, but a step towards its outer margin: Kelly (1971, fig. 4) suggested that initially it may have been wider and shallower, again with a flat base. A section (Kelly 1971, fig. 5) elsewhere through the west ditch showed it to be of similar dimensions, with a slightly stepped but flattish bottom. Further ditch sections were excavated on the southern side, where there is no upstanding earthwork. These were of similar dimensions (Kelly 1971, p. 66; figs. 6 and 7) but lacked unambiguous evidence for a flat bottom to the ditch. The dump bank was symmetrical with front and rear slopes at about 35 degrees (Avery 1993, Appendix A, p. 276). Kelly compared the Loose evidence to other English fort and *oppida* sites, but perceptibly remarked that the French Fécamp series 'show ditches far wider and flatter than all the English examples adduced except for the Silchester Inner Ditch....' (1971, p. 68). He noted the tendency towards wider, shallow ditches associated with earthworks then attributed to the decades preceding the Claudian conquest, as had been seen at Quarry Wood Camp, but noted that they are not flat-bottomed 'in the sense in which the term is used of the Fécamp series of a century earlier' (Kelly 1971, p. 69). Unlike many other candidates, Quarry Wood was retained by Cunliffe (2005, p. 402) as a 'distinct possibility' for a Fécamp configuration work, and Kelly's account minimally suggests it is more akin to the continental series than are other Kent and Sussex propositions. That said, it does not mirror the scale and configuration of the continental Fécamp works.

In the *Gazetteer to his Hill-Forts of Britain*, Hogg (1975, p. 203-204) drew attention to the bank at the east end of the coastal cliff-top promontory fort (circa 14ha) at East Hill, Hastings [Sussex: 3727] as a possible contender as a Fécamp-type defence. Despite the attraction of the proposition, subsequent earthwork survey has clarified the degree of alteration adjacent to this rampart, including the wholesale removal of any accompanying ditch within what is now a caravan park. The date of this large bank, which overlies an earlier one and takes advantage of the local topography, has not been established (Fradley, Newsome 2008).

By the mid-1970s, 'Fécamp', however, was also being used in England as a general descriptor for flat-bottomed ditches. It was thus often applied to ditches much slighter than continental examples (e.g. Dyer noted the Caburn's ditch at circa 9 m wide (1973, p. 277). Avery, in his 1976 overview, while offering the classic Wheeler definition (1976, p. 11), elsewhere – and unhelpfully – used 'Fécamp' generically to apply to dump banks associated with the English *oppida* (1976, p. 40). The next decade saw further Fécamp attributions abandoned. For example, detailed examination of the stratification suggested the phase 4 earthworks at Danebury likely dated to a later Roman, if not post-Roman, refurbishment (Cunliffe 1983, p. 183; 1984, p. 21).

## Conclusion

In stark contrast with continental developments, where the number of enclosed sites displaying fortifications with Fécamp characteristics has increased since Hogg's fieldwork (1969), the identification of similar works in Britain has been distinctly more faltering. By the end of the 1960s, Hawkes had produced a rationale to explain this rarity within the then-prevailing cultural-historical paradigm. More broadly it is apparent that univallate arrangements where a major dump rampart is fronted by a V- or U- shaped ditch are proportionately much more prevalent here, notably in the Wessex / Welsh Marches area, but also including at English enclosed and territorial *oppida*. Despite the evidence that at least some British dump ramparts belong earlier within the first millennium BC, there still seems little reason to support Collis and Ralston's bold claim (1976, p. 146) that the development of continental dump ramparts might betray British influence. While more sustained interest in cross-Channel contacts in the Late Iron Age has recently developed (e.g. Lamb 2018), to date it has not focused on hillforts and hillfort defences.

From Oldbury to Pitchbury Rings, most English examples that have been claimed simply do not qualify in scale terms as Fécamp configuration works even when they unambiguously include the basic 'building blocks'. This reservation applies to all three examples mapped by Collis and Ralston in 1976 and repeated by Fichtl in 2010. Excavation seems to have demonstrated only two 'new' candidates in the last half-century. At *Calleva Atrebatum* (Silchester) that case may be less clear-cut than it appeared to Boon (1969); the site may remain at best in the 'probable'

category in light of the substantial destruction of its rampart<sup>3</sup>. In spite of Cunliffe's continuing but not unqualified support, the slighter character of the works at Quarry Wood, Loose, Kent and the original excavator's reticence suggest that this site may only be considered as a 'possible' instance.

If, as in Gaul, there is now no reason to link the distribution of Fécamp-specification banks and canal-like ditches exclusively with the Belgae, there is equally no reason to restrict the search for insular examples to south-east and south-central Britain. If the anti-Roman dimension to their development has any validity for the Gallic series, there is surely a case that similar works might have been developed elsewhere in Britain in relation to the slower advance of Roman armies here, at least for some areas, notably those with limestones or other bedded rocks which would have favoured the creation of flat-bottomed ditching. But to date no examples have been claimed. While *muri gallici* remain absent (Buchsenschutz, Ralston 2014), the Fécamp configuration of massive unretained dump bank with accompanying broad, flat-bottomed ditch is at best a rarity in southern British Iron Age fortification through the first century BC to the Claudian invasion.

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<sup>3</sup> This sector of Silchester is currently being re-examined by Professor Fulford's University of Reading team.

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## Abstract

This review suggests that confirmed examples of ramparts and ditches conforming to the late Iron Age Fécamp specification first identified by Wheeler in northern France are absent in southern Britain. Debatable instances are rare; and most examples that have been claimed can be rejected.

## Résumé

Cet article suggère que des exemples confirmés de remparts et de fossés conformes aux caractéristiques du type Fécamp de la fin de l'âge du fer, tel que défini pour la première fois par Wheeler dans le nord de la France, sont absents dans le sud de la Grande-Bretagne. Les exemples discutables sont rares et la plupart des cas revendiqués comme tels peuvent être rejetés.