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### **Mound 3**

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ARJAN LOUWEN & DAVID FONTIJN

# DEATH REVISITED

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*The excavation of three Bronze Age barrows and surrounding landscape at Apeldoorn-Wieselseweg*



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# DEATH REVISITED

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*The excavation of three Bronze Age barrows and surrounding landscape at Apeldoorn-Wieselseweg*

ARJAN LOUWEN & DAVID FONTIJN (EDS)

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## Chapter 9

### Mound 3

Arjan Louwen, David Fontijn,  
Cristian van der Linde, Patrick Valentijn,  
Liesbeth Smits & Erica van Hees

#### 9.1 Introduction

Mound 3 is located 50 metres to the east of Mound 2 and to the north borders on the edge of the same forest plot with young pine trees as Mound 2. Even though this mound is located practically next to the forest path and only a few trees grow here, one would still easily pass it by without noticing it (Fig. 9.1). The current mound body is not even 50 centimetres high, and has suffered heavily from ploughing, leaving it irregular in shape. As such it is difficult to determine its original diameter. The profile sections indicate that this was 9 metres at most. The (south) west flank of the mound gradually transitions in the slightly sloping relief of the surrounding terrain. The northern and eastern mound flanks, in contrast, are steeper and rounder in shape and as a result somewhat better visible. Overall there initially was some doubt as to whether the modest Mound 3 was in fact a barrow. Some charcoal particles found in a coring of the mound and its presence



**Fig. 9.1:** Mound 3 prior to excavation. Photograph taken facing east.

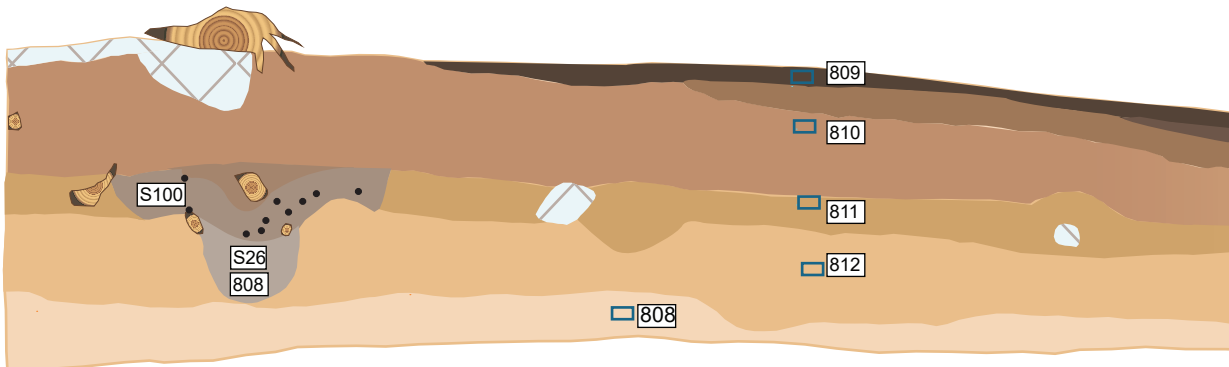
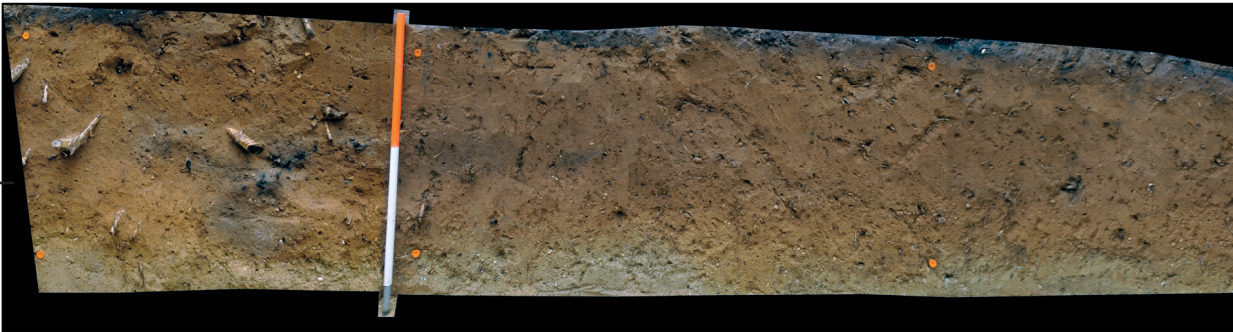
in the direct vicinity of Mounds 1 and 2 led us to give Mound 3 the benefit of the doubt. As such excavation of the southwest quadrant of Mound 3 (Trench 301) started in 2008. As the results described below will show, it

exceeded all expectations. In total the two field campaigns uncovered ten Middle Bronze Age A cremation burials. In addition, the only indications for a human presence of this terrain during the Iron Age were found here.

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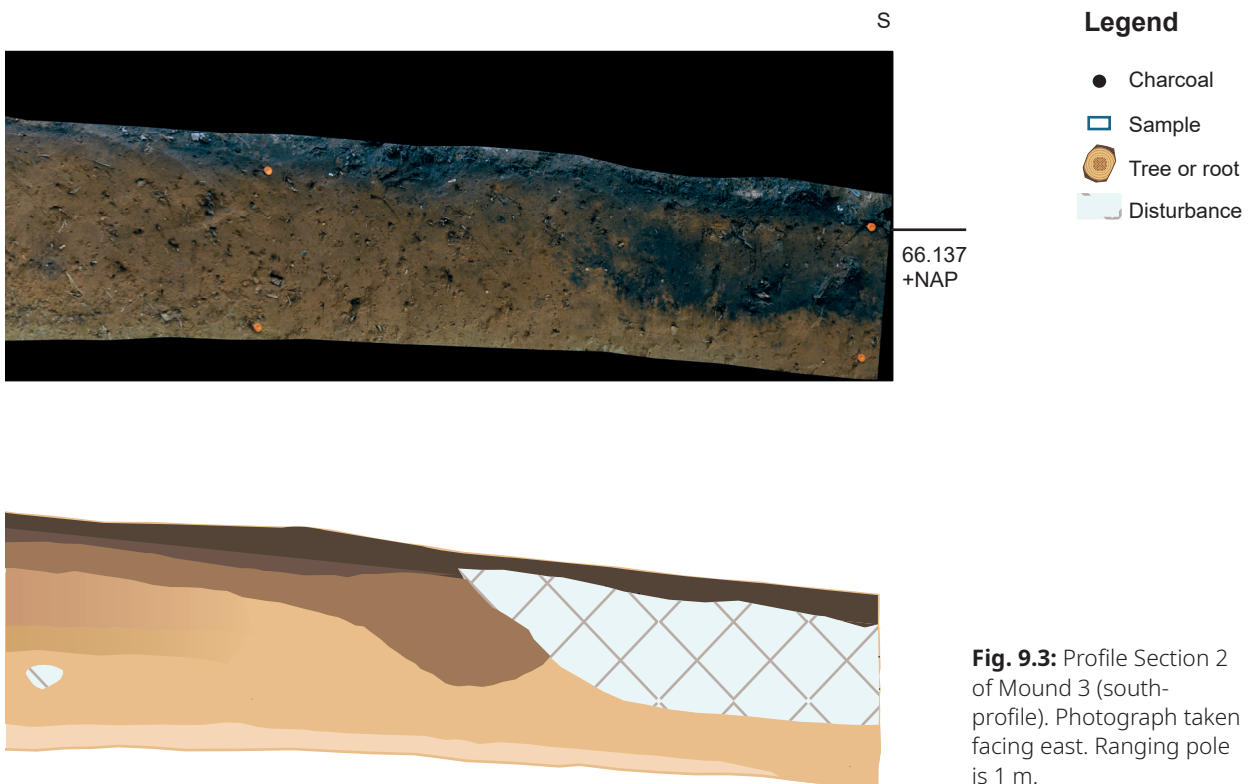
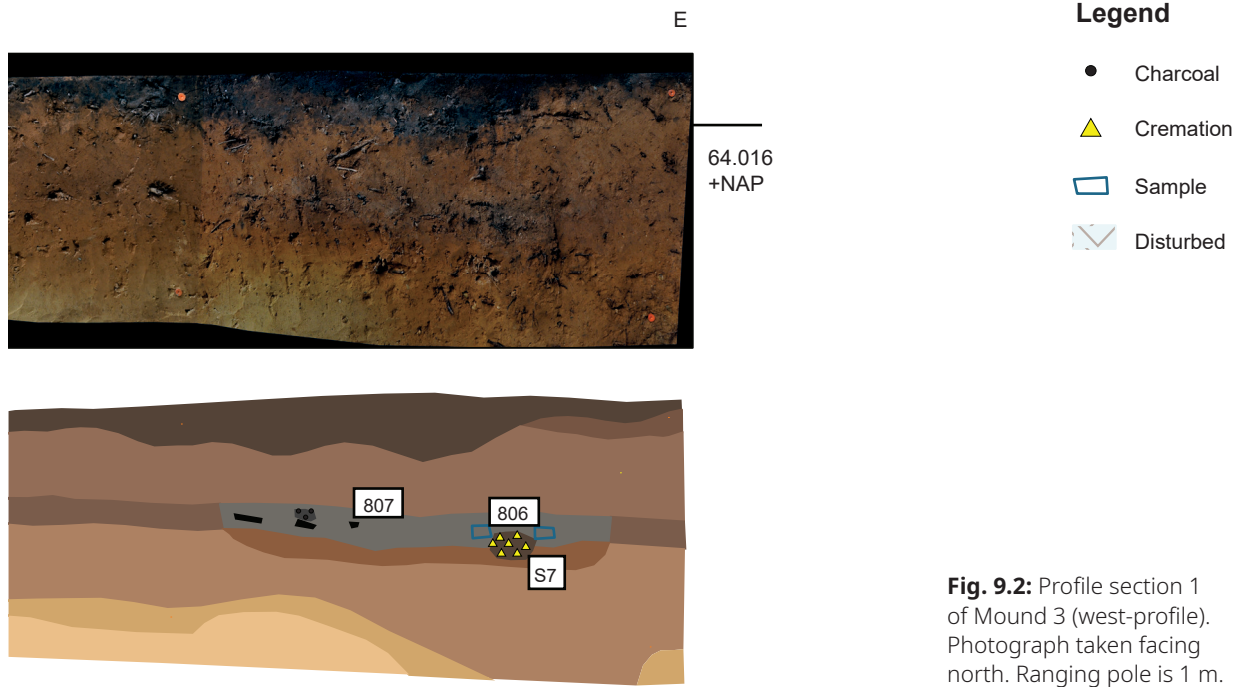
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### 9.2 Structure Mound 3

The structure of Mound 3 strongly resembles Mound 2 (see Figs.9.2 and 9.3). In total eight excavation levels were dug in order to document the structure of this

barrow. Underneath the debris on top of the mound a young dark grey/humus-rich layer was encountered. Level 1 was dug in the top of this layer. The humus-rich top varied in thickness between 5 and 15 centimetres.



In spots the bottom of this layer was slightly bleached. Directly underneath this complex of young forest ground, the remains of an older Moder Podzol were visible. This Moder remnant also varied in thickness between 5 and 15 centimetres. Level 2 was dug in the transition of the young forest ground layer to the older Moder in the top of the mound. Underneath the Moder remnant the mound body had the characteristic ruddy, light brown yellow colour (see also Chapters 7 and 8). The texture of the mound body can also best be described as slightly loamy with fine gravel. Excavation Levels 3 (Fig. 9.4) and 4 (Fig. 9.5) were dug in the mound body. When digging these levels it quickly became clear how severely the barrow had been disturbed in the last century: the plough furrows were visible till Level 4.

Between Levels 4 and 5 light grey shades were also visible in the ruddy main colour of the subsoil. This light grey colour was caused by the predominantly small, but sporadically also larger charcoal particles. The presence of features and finds also drastically increased from Level 5 downwards. The layer, or rather zone, with charcoal particles varied between 10 and 20 centimetres in thickness. The old surface must have been in this region. Level 5 was dug in the top of this complex, and Level 6 at the bottom. Underneath the zone around the old surface, the subsoil initially coloured ruddy again (as it did in Mounds 1 and 2), followed by a pale and coarse sandy layer with a high gravel component. Level 7 was dug in the ruddy layer underneath the old surface, and Level 8 was dug as a control level in the pale, coarse sand soil (Fig. 9.6).

## 9.3 Features and structures

### 9.3.1 Graves

In total the remnants of ten cremation graves were uncovered in the southwest quadrant of Mound 3. Once again, interpreting these graves was not without problems due to the poor readability of the features and subsoil. A number of features proved so complex or disturbed in the field, that it took both field campaigns to excavate them. In the following each grave context is described and the features interpreted. The physical anthropological analyses were conducted by dr. L. Smits (University of Amsterdam), and the reader is referred to App. 1 for more information.

#### Grave 9

Some loose cremation remains were already encountered when digging the second excavation level, about a metre from the centre of the quadrant. The zone with cremation remains was labelled S2 in the field. The cremation remains (only 58 gr.) were clearly not located in a feature. Deepening the excavation level by the cremation remains revealed four plough furrows (Fig. 9.4). The burnt bone remains therefore were likely moved from elsewhere, probably a grave located high in the mound body. It was briefly thought that this could be Grave 16, which was located close by (Fig. 9.25). This grave, however, is located quite a bit deeper in the mound and analysis of the cremation remains established that the bone remains originate from different individuals. The cremation remains from Grave 2 cannot be linked to one of the



Fig. 9.4: Level 3.

graves in the southwest quadrant and therefore must be from a disturbed grave located elsewhere in the barrow. The high position in the mound body makes it likely that this is a secondary burial, rather than a primary burial. Due to the very small amount of bone remains it can only be established that this likely concerns an adult individual who was between 20 and 40 years old at the time of death (see App. 1).

#### Grave 10 and Grave 17

Grave 10 was also encountered high in the mound body (2008, Level 3) around the northern roots of the tree trunk

located in the centre of the quadrant (Fig. 9.25) and most likely is also a secondary burial in the mound body. A clearly delineated feature, however, was not visible, and there were also many disturbances from the top visible at this depth (Fig. 9.7). For this reason the whole zone with cremation remains was labelled S3. In total a little over 200 grams of burnt bone material was collected from this zone. It is important to note that the tree trunk in question was not removed from the quadrant till 2009 after it had been completely uncovered. As a result more cremation remains were assigned to Grave 10 in 2009. In addition, a second concentration of cremation remains was



**Fig. 9.5:** Level 4.



**Fig. 9.6:** Level 8.



**Fig. 9.7:** Grave 10 was encountered quite high in the mound body and turned out to be heavily disturbed. The white-grey cremation remains show up well against the dark colour of the disturbance, which is likely a result of ploughing and root systems. One of the roots of the tree trunk located in the centre of the quadrant is just visible in the bottom right corner of the photograph, which was taken facing north.



**Fig. 9.8:** Grave 17. Photograph taken facing east.

encountered among the roots of the same tree trunk in 2009 at the depth of Level 6 (S24, Grave 17, Fig. 9.25). This concentration (804 gr.) was located more on the west side of the tree trunk at a clearly deeper level in the mound/subsoil (Fig. 9.8). It was furthermore striking that there was a large concentration of pebbles right underneath the cremation remains (Fig. 9.9). As no pit cut or fill could be discerned, it is impossible to say whether the pebbles were part of Grave 17 or a natural concentration in the subsoil.

While freeing the tree trunk it briefly appeared that the roots of the tree had pushed apart a single cremation burial and that the cremation remains from Grave 10 (S3) and Grave 17 (S24) were originally from a single grave. Analysis of the cremation remains, however, established that the bone remains from the two contexts are really from separate individuals. Grave 10 contained the remains of a likely adult, female individual. In Grave 17 a more certainly adult female some 20–40 years old at the time of death was buried (see App. 1).

Now that we can exclude that there was any direct relationship between Grave 17 and Grave 10 based on the cremation remains, we may assume that the concentration of cremation remains of Grave 17 were for the most part still in their original position. As no pit cut could be discerned and



**Fig. 9.9:** Detail of the concentration of pebbles underneath the cremation remains of Grave 17. Photograph taken facing east.

the cremation remains were not encountered till Level 6, there are two possible scenarios regarding the nature of the grave. A first scenario is that Grave 17 is a secondary burial that was dug straight through the mound and into the old subsoil. However, as already noted, no pit cut was observed to strengthen this argument. It is therefore just as possible that Grave 17 was actually a shallow burial that predates the erection of the barrow.

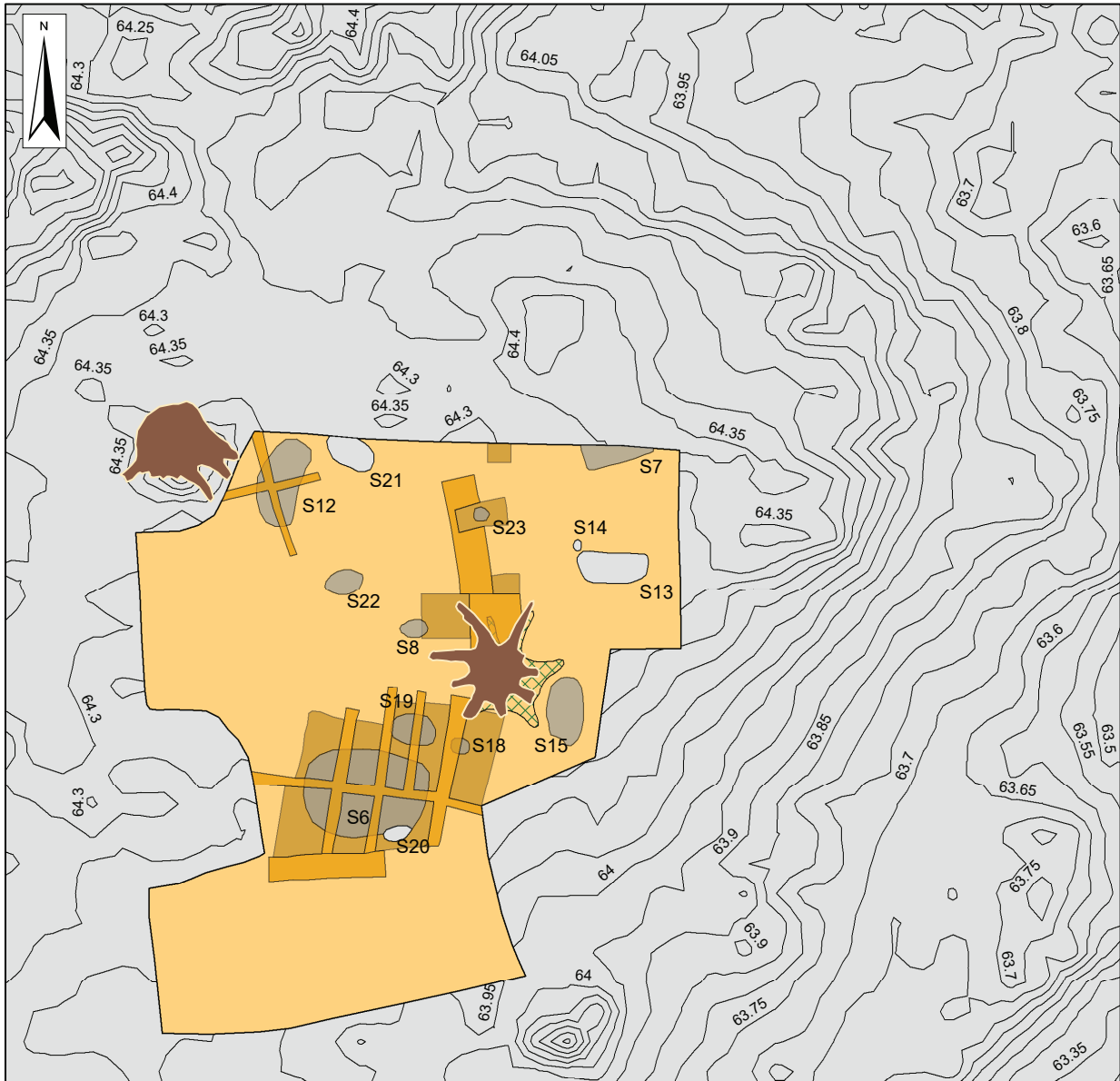
### Grave 11

The next grave (S6) was located far outside the centre of the barrow, in the zone where the mound flank transitions into the terrain outside of the barrow (Fig. 9.10). It is even in question whether the mound body ever extended this far. From Level 4 on, the first indications for the presence of a cremation burial were encountered at this location in the form of some loose cremation remains. In Level 5 a homogenous grey zone was visible between the roots and remnants of the plough furrows. This colour was caused by the presence of fine charcoal particles. The zone in question had an elongated shape, oriented southwest – northeast (Fig. 9.11). The maximum length was 230 centimetres, and the maximum width was 150 centimetres. At the northeast side the zone had a small extension with some lumps of charcoal at its core. This ‘extension’ was recorded as S19 and does not appear to be part of Grave 11. The homogenous grey zone with fine charcoal particles (Fill 2) just described had a clear core (160 × 80 cm) with a slightly darker colour (Fill 1). The darker colour of this core was the result of a much higher concentration of charcoal particles. The grave was located at the very heart of this core. The cremation remains were scattered in a swatch of 15 centimetres wide on average and a length of almost 1 metre and oriented southwest – northeast. In total there were 454 grams, likely of a man who was 20–40 years old at the time of his death (see App. 1; Figs. 9.12 and 9.13). It is also possible that the cremation remains were once in a long stretched out organic container that has since decayed. Directly to the southeast of the swatch of cremation remains was a zone with the same length and orientation with a very high concentration of charcoal lumps (± 700 gr.). This zone, or rather wide swatch, was 40 centimetres at its widest.

When taken as a whole the cremation remains and charcoal lumps form a long, stretched out zone of circa 60 × 100 centimetres with a southwest – northeast orientation, and a clear separation into a compartment with cremation remains and one with charcoal (Fig. 9.13). As with most features at the Wieselseweg, no visible pit cut or feature was visible. The strict separation of the cremation remains and the charcoal chunks raises the suspicion that the grave was once delineated. The vertical distribution of the cremation remains and charcoal lumps (nowhere more than 15 cm deep) also suggest that the

whole was contained in some manner. A pit with originally a rectangular shape seems the most plausible explanation for the typical distribution of the cremation remains and lumps of charcoal. As noted it is also possible that the whole was packed in an organic container of a similar shape.

This of course does not explain the grey (Fill 2) or the dark grey (Fill 1) ground around the grave. As was touched upon above, the greyness appears to be the result of fine charcoal particles. This is based on the fact that this phenomenon only occurs at the Wieselseweg



**Legend**

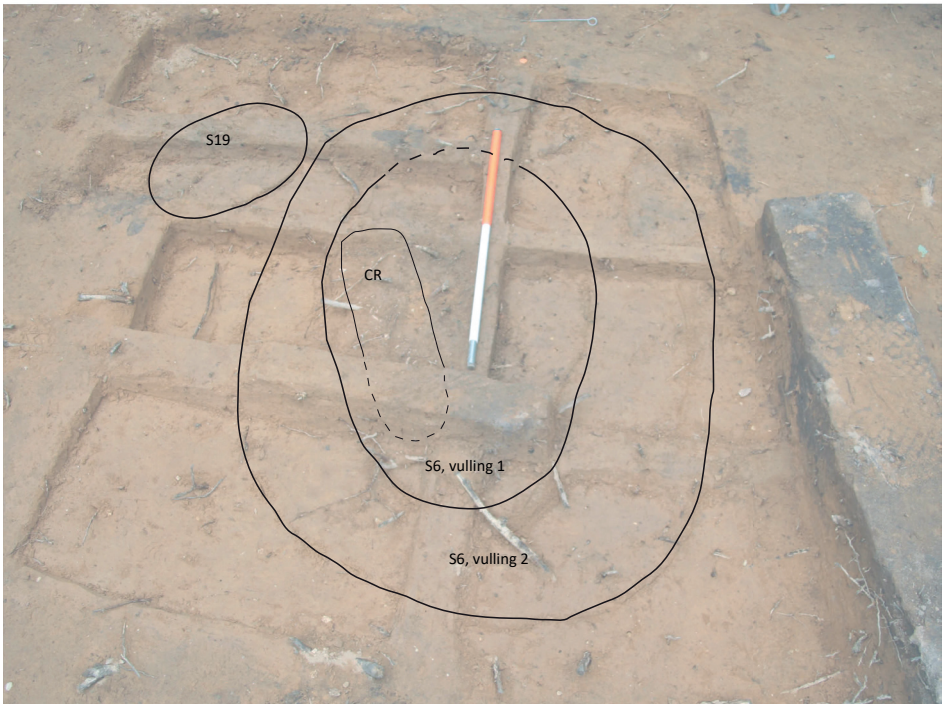
- Features Level 6
- Discarded features Level 6
- Disturbances Level 6
- Deeper sections Level 6
- Profile section baulks
- Tree trunks
- Level 6



**Fig. 9.10:** Digitized excavation drawing of Levels 5–6.

around features with (minuscule) charcoal particles (see for example also S1 in Trench 24; Chapter 10). It is striking that with these features the grey colouring forms a kind of 'aureole' around the features in question. At Grave 11 there is furthermore a difference in colour observable: it grows lighter towards the outside. Moreover, the 'aureole' follows the exact same orientation as the grave itself. The most plausible explanation for the gradual lightening in

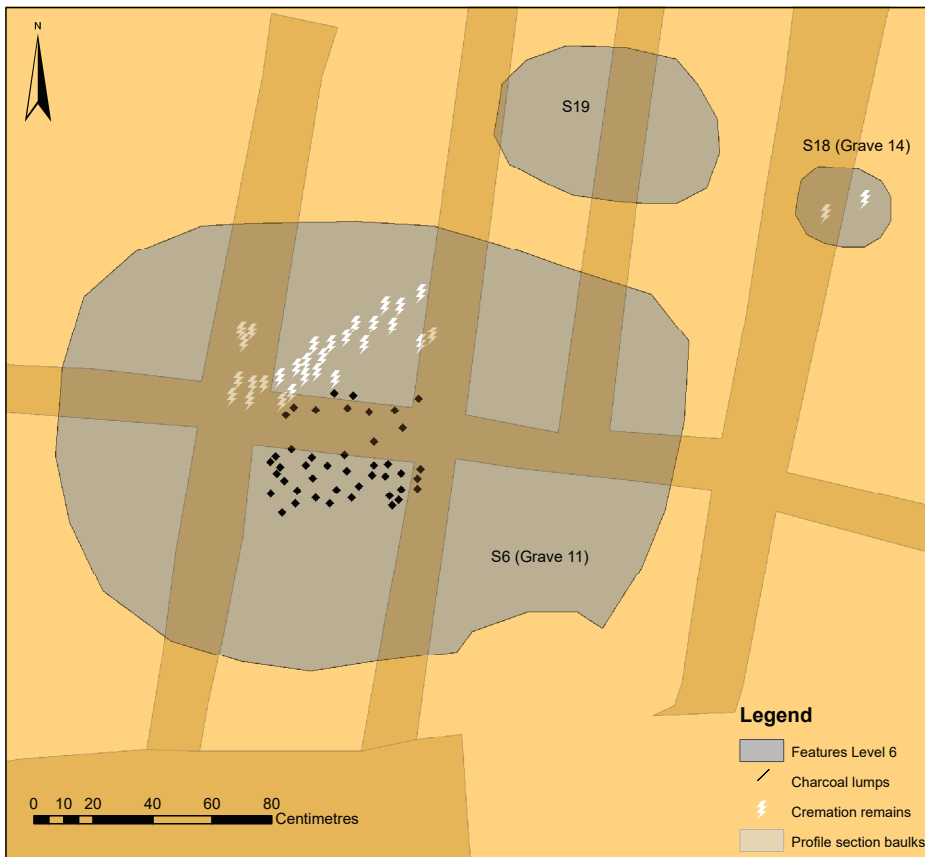
colour or the subsoil around Grave 11 is bioturbation, by which the finer and lighter material in particular is transported from the archaeological context to far outside it. Towards the outside the density of this material gradually diminishes, which causes the lightening of the colour. One argument in support of this explanation is the distance from the outer edge of the grey discolouration and the heart of the feature, in other words the cremation



**Fig. 9.11:** Overview Grave 11. Photograph taken facing East.



**Fig. 9.12:** Detail cremation remains in Grave 11.



**Fig. 9.13:** Digitally altered detail excavation drawing of Grave 11.

remains and charcoal lumps. This is between 40 and 50 centimetres in every direction (Fig. 9.13).

The taphonomic processes bring us to the location of the grave in relation to the mound body. The core of Grave 11 is located some 7.5 metres from the centre of the southwest quadrant. The diameter of Mound 3 was likely no more than 9 metres. This means that Grave 11 must have been located outside of Mound 3. The low depth of the grave from the original/present ground level must have made Grave 11 extra vulnerable to the taphonomic processes described above. As will become clear in the following, Grave 12, located centrally underneath the mound body, was of similar nature and dimensions as Grave 11. Grave 12, however, is much less 'faded' or 'wiped out' and disturbed as it was protected by the mound body. A question that follows from this is how Grave 11 relates to Mound 3. This will be addressed later in this chapter (Section 9.5).

### Grave 12

Already in 2008 a small concentration of cremation remains was found at the depth of Level 5, directly alongside the western profile section of the quadrant (Grave 12, Figs. 9.10 and 9.14). In that year it was decided not to excavate the concentration (S7) due to the risk of running out of time. A high plateau therefore was left around the concentration (90 × 75 cm). This proved to be a wise decision when we reopened the mound in 2009, as another two weeks were spent documenting this grave in that year.

Upon reopening Trench 301 in 2009, the plateau was immediately cleaned up. At this point the rest of the excavation level had been deepened another 10 centimetres below the level of the plateau. Directly to the east of the plateau, more cremation remains were found which were likely from the same context. On the plateau itself small charred beams (20–30 cm in length) started to be uncovered in addition to the cremation remains. In order to document the grave, a local measuring system was created with the main measuring tape running over the longest axis of the grave (WSW – ENE). The grave itself was divided into four main sections. The subsoil surrounding the plateau formed the fifth section. The three sections south of the main measuring tape (sections 1, 2 and 5) were each excavated to the depth of Level 6. This revealed a long, stretched out spread of cremation remains (15 × 100 cm, 1237 grams; Figs. 9.14 and 9.15). This spread was collected in individual sections of 10 × 10 centimetres, so that it would be possible to study the distribution of the cremation remains in the burial pit. Little to no charcoal was found among the cremation remains.

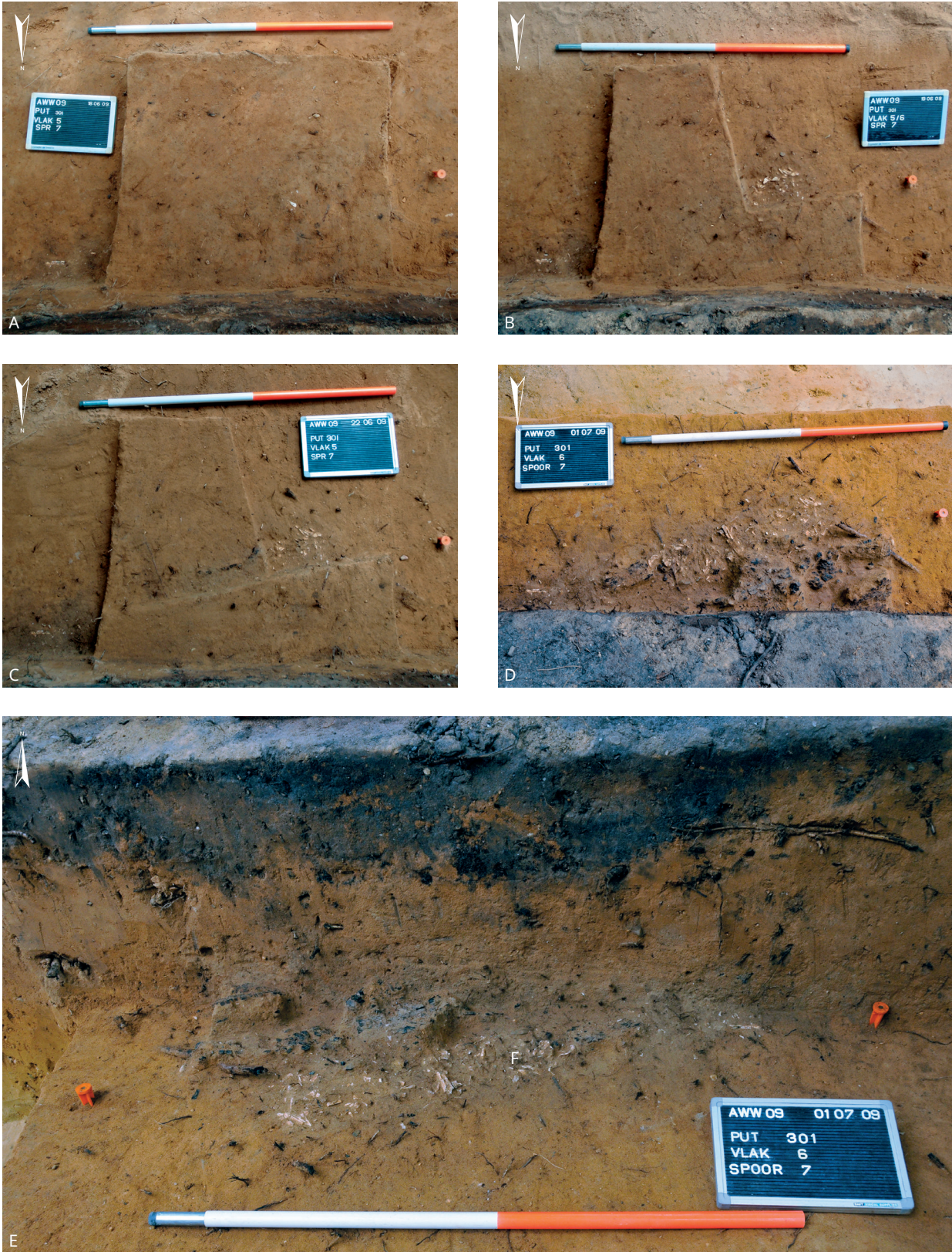
In contrast, charcoal is all that was found when the northern sections (3 and 4) were excavated. Initially four

more substantial small beams could be discerned in the distribution of the charcoal (V662, V663, V664, V665). These did not form clear units but were concentrations of at most 10 × 40 centimetres of charcoal lumps and snippets of which the direction of the grain and the distribution indicated that they were originally small beams (Figs. 9.14 and 9.15). These units, or rather concentrations, could even have originally been a single whole which later disintegrated in the grave. Wood analysis determined that the individual samples were oak (*Quercus*). It is furthermore worth noting that the beams placed in the grave have the same orientation as the swatch of cremation remains and the grave pit itself (WSW – ENE). One of the aforementioned burnt beams (V665) was located on top of the cremation remains (Fig. 9.16). Finally, a small concentration of charcoal snippets (V621) was observed some 30 centimetres south of Grave 12. Given the distance between these snippets and the grave they likely never lay in the grave, though a relationship with Grave 12 cannot be excluded.

To sum up, there was a rectangular grave pit of about 1 metre long with a WSW – ENE orientation visible at the depth of Level 6 (Figs. 9.14 and 9.15). The northern half of this pit is still in the northwest quadrant of Mound 3. Within this pit there was a clear division into a section with well-sorted cremation remains of 15 × 100 centimetres, with a section with charred oak beams to the north. The borders of the burial pit were clearly visible by the cremation remains. It was harder to discern the edge of the pit by the charcoal as it extended up to 20 centimetres beyond the western edge of the cremation remains (Fig. 9.14). As the charcoal and the cremation remains were located at the same level, the charcoal originally was likely in the burial pit as well. The information recorded in the western profile section (see Fig. 9.2) confirms this assertion. One of the oaken beams likely rolled onto the cremation remains when the pit was filled up.

This brings us to the position of the grave in relation to the mound body. Grave 12 is the most centrally located grave of Mound 3. Moreover, the grave was clearly covered by the mound body (see Fig. 9.2). The latter also explains the good state of preservation Grave 12 when compared with most of the other graves found in and underneath Mound 3. Whether this indeed was the primary grave of Mound 3 will be discussed later in this chapter (see Section 9.5). For now we will limit ourselves to the interpretation of how the grave itself was created.

It is clear that the grave was dug in from the old surface underneath the mound. The cremation remains, probably those of a man some 20–40 years of age at the time of death (see App. 1), were collected and placed in the elongated burial pit with care. We saw something comparable before with Grave 11. Here it is also the question whether the cremation remains were scattered



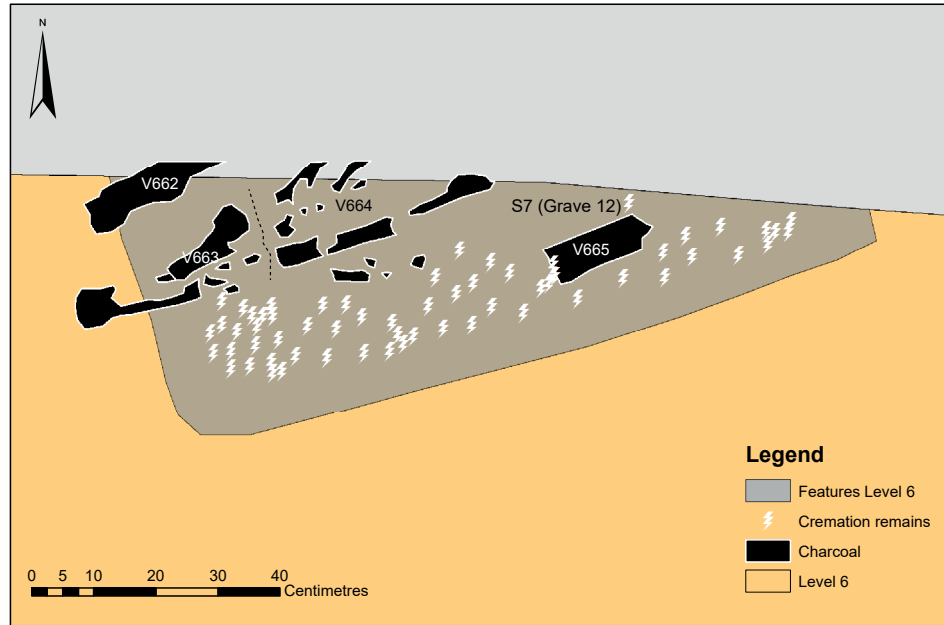
**Fig. 9.14:** A series of photographs of the excavation of Grave 12. Photographs a-d taken facing south, photograph e taken facing north.

in the pit or were placed in the pit packed in an organic container. Detailed analysis of the cremation remains revealed that these were neither in their anatomically correct position, nor where they placed in the grave in any particular order. While no definitive answer can be given regarding the question posed above, the cremation remains must have been transported from the pyre location to Mound 3 in some manner. Whether the remains were then unpacked and scattered or whether they were placed in the grave in an organic container

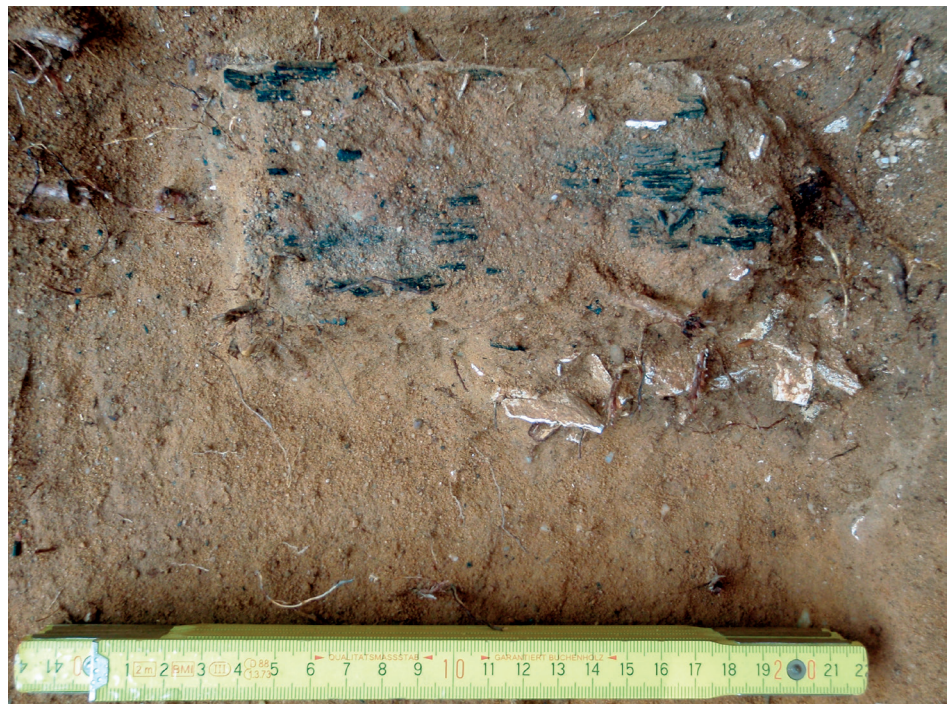
unfortunately cannot be determined based on the surviving remains. What is clear is that also in Grave 12 the suspected remains of the pyre played an important role. The charred beams were placed in the burial pit with the same care as the cremation remains.

### Grave 13

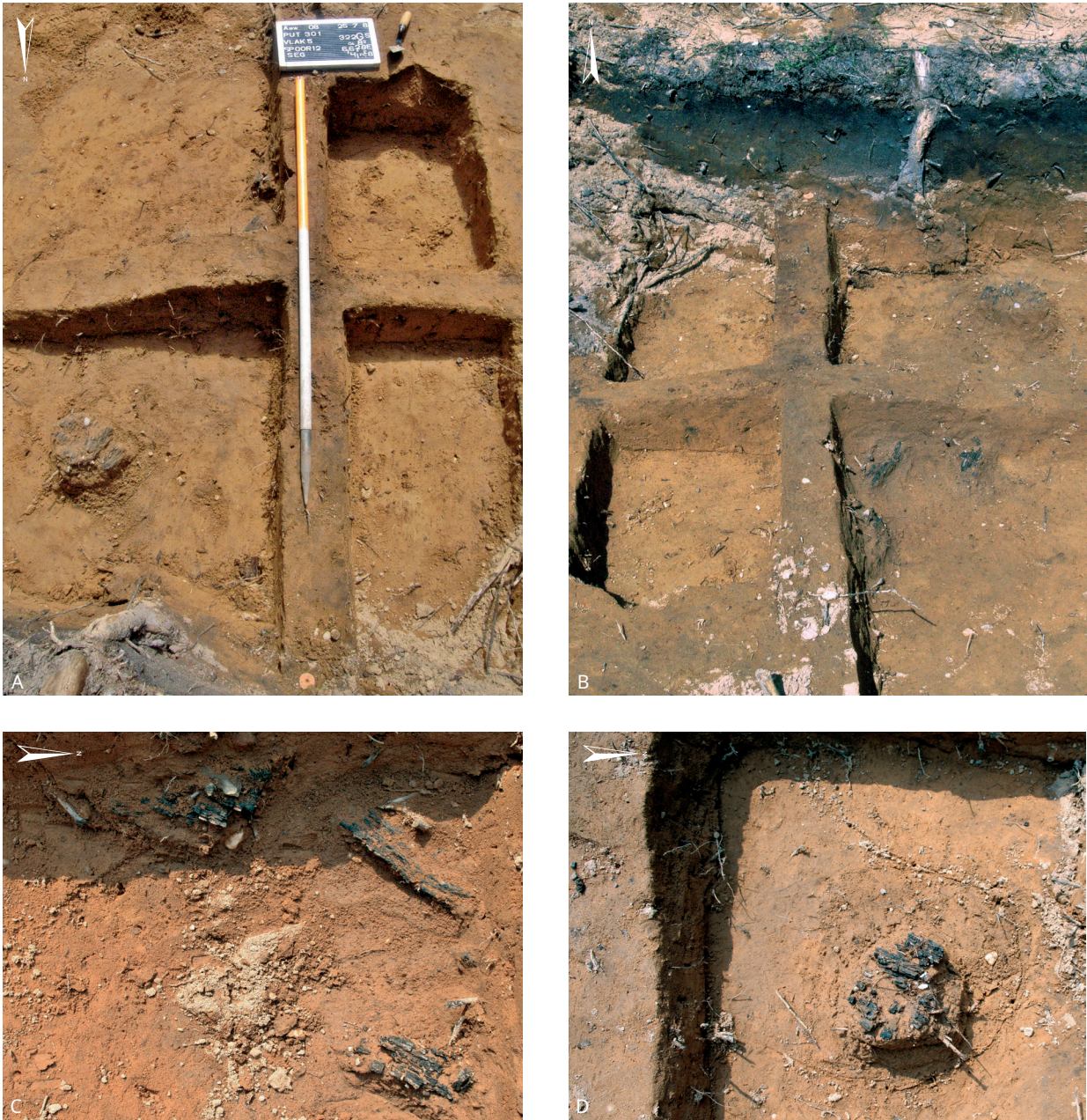
At the western edge of Mound 3, possibly even entirely outside of the original mound, a long stretched out and irregular scatter of cremation remains and charcoal was



**Fig. 9.15:** Digital detail drawing of excavation level of Grave 12.



**Fig. 9.16:** Charred beam (V665) lying on top of the cremation remains. Photograph taken facing north.

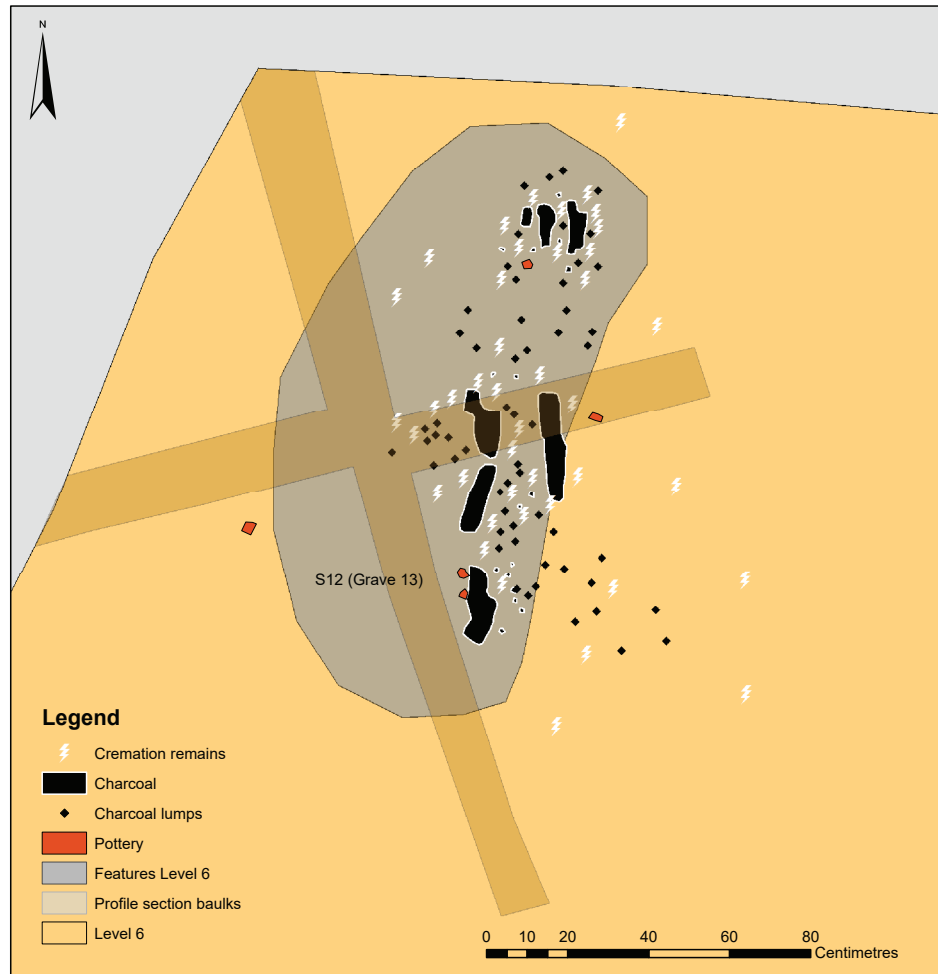


**Fig. 9.17:** Series of photograph of the excavation of Grave 13.

found at the depth of Level 4 (S12, Grave 13; Figs. 9.17 and 9.18). Due to its vulnerable location just underneath the present-day ground level, the burial proved to be heavily damaged. Multiple plough furrows and tree roots crisscrossed the paltry remains of Grave 13. The grave was recovered under very dry and warm conditions in 2008. The whole was divided into four segments. The two section baulks between the four segments formed the fifth and sixth segments. The grave was disturbed to such a degree that any finer division into smaller segments to map the cremation remains (only 103 gr. in total) was not

deemed worthwhile. Extra care was taken with regards to the location of the charcoal concentrations and the global distribution of the cremation remains. Grave 13 is furthermore the only grave of Mound 3 in which multiple pottery fragments were found (Fig. 9.23).

As noted, Grave 13 consisted of a long stretched out spread of charcoal and cremation remains. This scatter had a SSW – NNE orientation and a maximum length of 130 centimetres. The width of the scatter varied between 35 and 55 centimetres. This variation in width was primarily the result of the direction in which the grave



**Fig. 9.18:** Digital interpretation of the detail drawing of the excavation level of Grave 13.

was hit by the plough: perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the original grave, which caused the contents of the grave to be pulled away in both directions. As a result, a sherd (V114) originating from Grave 13 was found some 60 centimetres outside of the original grave, and a second sherd at a comparable distance (V250). A clear pit cut of the grave was not visible, but the vertical distribution of the whole does indicate that the complex was dug in and buried. The cremation remains were found between Levels 4 and 6 and widely dispersed throughout the grave. Clear concentrations were not present. Sherds from one and the same pot were also recovered scattered throughout the grave. The burned fracture planes indicate these accompanied the deceased on the pyre. Charcoal was also present in all preserved parts of the grave.

At first glance the distribution of the various find categories appears somewhat messy and random. However, when the distribution and vertical position of the charcoal is considered, while also taking into consideration that we are likely missing a large part of the original burial, Grave 13 does appear to have a

certain ordering to it (Figs. 9.17 and 9.18). Distributed over the full length of the grave, were seven larger charred beams. These must have been located just above the bottom of the original grave (on average 15 cm beneath Level 4). When we then consider the direction of the individual beams and the direction of the wood grain, the various wood fragments turn out to lie one after another. Gaps only occur in those places where the plough hit the grave. When we furthermore consider that the whole also extends into the plough furrows, it strongly appears that the bottom of the grave was once 'paved' with the charred beams. They likely formed the selected remains of the pyre. The cremation remains were those of child some 1–4 years of age at the time of death (App. 1) and were scattered on the burned beams with the burned potsherds, or interred in an organic container. As the cremation remains and potsherds were located at a higher level in the grave, these were less well preserved. It is once again striking that the suspected pyre remains played a role in the funerary ritual. Apparently these were an important part of the grave inventory, as were the human remains.

### Grave 14

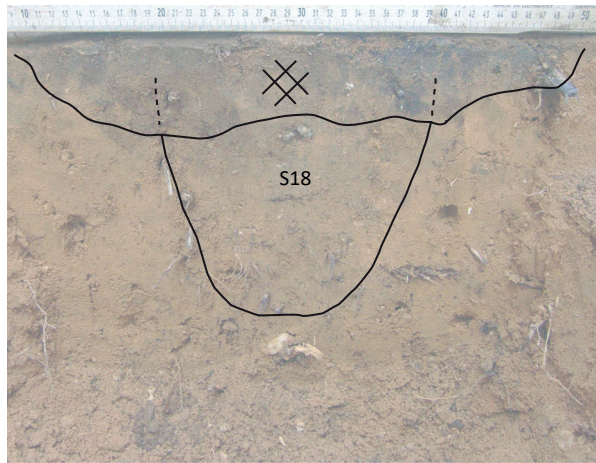
In the edge zone of the mound, 120 centimetres northeast of Grave 11 (Figs. 9.10 and 9.25), there was a small pit filled with a modest amount of cremation remains (36.8 gr.). These turned out to belong to a child of around 2 years old at the time of death (18 months  $\pm$  6; see App. 1). The feature (S18) was over cut by a plough furrow. Even so, a vague pit 25 centimetres wide and a surviving depth of 20 centimetres was visible (Fig. 9.19). The cremation remains were spread out through the fill of the pit. Even though Graves 11 and 14 were positioned close together it is difficult to say whether there was any relationship between them. It is clear that these concern two different individuals (a toddler and likely male adult; App. 1). With regards to the relation of the small



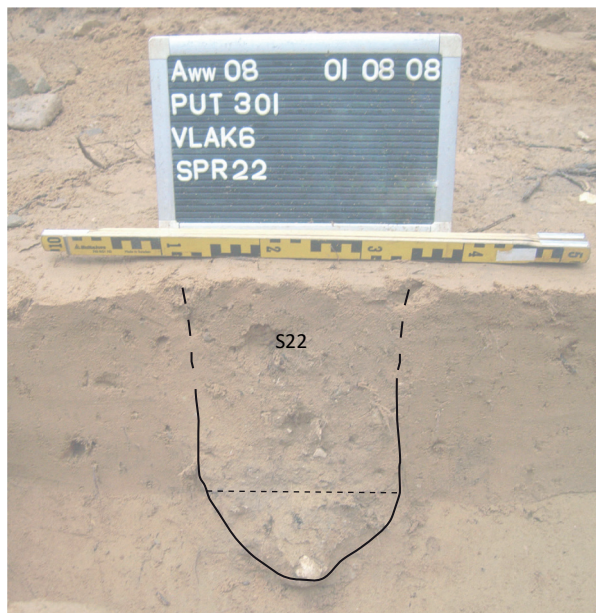
grave to Mound 3, it remains the question whether the grave was ever covered by the mound body. In any case, it was not possible to determine whether this grave predates construction of the mound or whether it is a secondary burial based on stratigraphy.

### Grave 15

The next grave (15) was found in the zone around the foot of the barrow (Figs. 9.10 and 9.25) and was uncovered at the level of the old surface. The feature (S22) in question was a pit some 45 centimetres in diameter, which continued another 40 centimetres under the old surface. The fill of the pit was a slightly greyer colour than the surrounding matrix due to the presence of ash. In particular the



**Fig. 9.19:** Grave 14. Photograph taken facing west.



**Fig. 9.20:** Grave 15. Photograph taken facing north.

bottom half of the pit contained a clear concentration of cremation remains (ca. 20 × 20 cm; Fig. 9.20). The width of the pit and the clear concentration of cremation remains (784 gr.) on the bottom of the pit make it likely that we are dealing here with a so-called orb-cremation, whereby the cremation remains originally were deposited in the pit in something organic, like a textile cloth. The relationship to the mound body could not be determined based on stratigraphy, due to its position in the edge zone of the barrow. Analysis of cremation remains established this to be the grave of an adult female (20–40 years old at the time of death; App. 1). Green discolourations found on parts of the arm and the skull could indicate the presence of bronze grave goods on the pyre.

#### Grave 16

A small scatter of cremation remains were encountered (S23, Level 6) some 3 metres from the centre of the mound (Figs. 9.10 and 9.25) at the depth of the old surface. No clear pit or concentration could be discerned while deepening the excavation level around the scatter. The subsoil had locally been strongly disturbed by tree roots. The cremation remains, which later would be determined to be those of a child 2–6 years old at the time death (App. 1), had become spread out over a zone 40 centimetres wide



**Fig. 9.21:** Grave 18. The photograph shows the compact orb of cremation remains. Photograph taken facing south.

and 30 centimetres deep. In total only 82 grams of burnt bone remains were collected. It is possible that the loose cremation remains found without any context at a higher excavation level (Level 5, V90, V180 and V326) belong to the same grave. But even then it would still only amount to 150 grams. In addition to the cremation remains, a number of small charcoal lumps were collected (3.3 gr.). The original shape and size of Grave 16 unfortunately cannot be established. A secondary burial in a small pit seems to be the most plausible option.

#### Grave 18

The last grave (18) was a small pit (S26) some 45 centimetres in diameter and was not encountered until Level 7. The grave was located roughly 3 metres from the centre of the mound (Fig. 9.25) and contained a well-preserved orb-cremation (997 gr.). The orb located on the bottom of the pit contained the remains of a (probable) female who was 20–40 years old at the time of death (App. 1; Fig. 9.21). This pit extended another 18 centimetres beneath the seventh excavation level. No trace of the grave could be discerned above Level 7, which makes it highly likely that the grave was covered by the mound body – although one should be wary of the strongly weathered soils of the Wieselseweg (see also Section 5.4).

#### 9.3.2 Other features

In total 30 feature numbers were assigned to phenomena in and around Mound 3 during the two field campaigns. Of these 30 features, 14 were later discarded as they proved to be natural phenomena or recent plough marks. Of the remaining 16 feature numbers, ten were assigned to the graves described above. The remaining six features are briefly discussed in the following. There is reasonable doubt regarding four of these six features whether they are anthropogenic.

A very irregular pit (S8) without a clear cut was encountered in Level 5 in the edge zone of the mound. The feature had a maximum diameter of 46 centimetres and a maximum depth of 22 centimetres. The fill of the pit differed from the surrounding orange-brown subsoil – the presence of some charcoal speckles had coloured it slightly greyer. The texture (slightly gravelly, somewhat loamy sand) was consistent with the surrounding subsoil. As noted above, the feature was located in the edge zone of the mound and was very irregular in shape. Moreover, the feature was located only a few decimetres from the tree trunk in the centre of the quadrant. When all this is taken into consideration, it remains very much the question if this is indeed an anthropogenic feature. It is also entirely possible that small charcoal fragments were moved from the old surface deeper into the subsoil through some form of bioturbation and there appear to form a pit that deviates from the contrastingly clean sand.

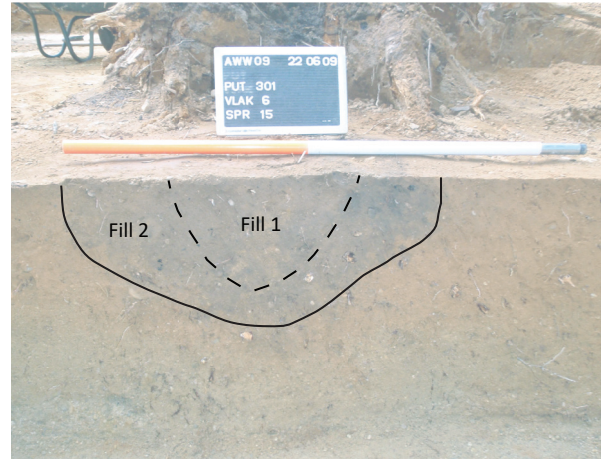
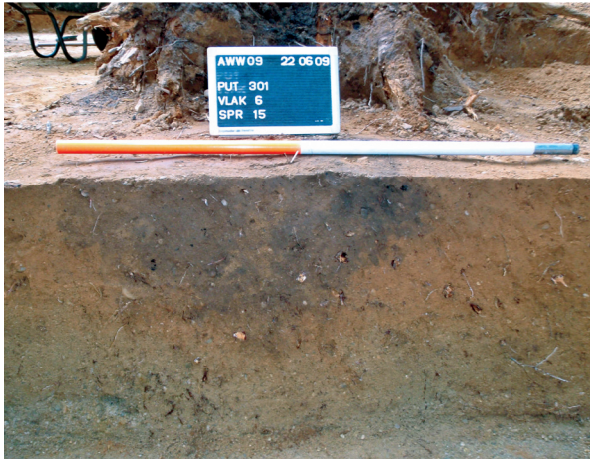
Trench	Feature	Level	Interpretation field	Interpretation definite	Depth (cm)	Complex
301	1	2	Recent	Reclamation/plough mark		Forestry activities
301	2	2	Cremation	Cremation		Grave 9
301	3	3	Cremation	Cremation		Grave 10
301	4	4	Recent	Reclamation/plough mark		Forestry activities
301	5	4	Recent	Reclamation/plough mark		Forestry activities
301	6	4	Cremation	Cremation	26	Grave 11
301	7	5	Cremation	Cremation		Grave 12
301	8	5	Pit	Pit??	22	Probably natural
301	9	5	Ditch	Layer	11	<i>Discarded</i>
301	10	5	Pit	Pit	18	Grave 10?
301	11	5	Natural disturbance	Natural disturbance		<i>Discarded</i>
301	12	5	Cremation	Cremation	35	Grave 13
301	13	6	XXX	Discolouration		<i>Discarded</i>
301	14	6	XXX	Discolouration		<i>Discarded</i>
301	15	6	XXX	Pit	35	Pit under barrow
301	16	7	Pit	Pit??	38	Probably natural
301	17	7	Natural disturbance	Natural disturbance	16	<i>Discarded</i>
301	18	6	Cremation	Cremation	20	Grave 14
301	19	5	Pit	Pit	14	Grave 11?
301	20	5	Discolouration	Discolouration		<i>Discarded</i>
301	21	5	Discolouration	Discolouration		<i>Discarded</i>
301	22	6	Cremation	Cremation	40	Grave 15
301	23	5	Cremation	Cremation	30	Grave 16
301	24	6	Cremation	Cremation	>20	Grave 17
301	25	7	Natural disturbance	Old tree fall		<i>Discarded</i>
301	26	7	Cremation	Cremation	18	Grave 18
301	27	7	Discolouration	Discolouration		<i>Discarded</i>
301	28	7	Pit	Pit??	28	Probably natural
301	29	8	Discolouration	Discolouration		<i>Discarded</i>
301	30	8	Discolouration	Discolouration		<i>Discarded</i>

**Tab. 9.1:** All features Mound 3.

In 2008 several vague, light grey discolourations and areas with cremations remains were encountered around the tree trunk located in the centre of the quadrant. One of these vague, light grey coloured spots was S10, which was 11 centimetres deep from Level 5. Several small fragments of burnt bone were noted in the field in this spot. However, these were so small that they could not be collected. The feature was not clearly delineated and once again could only be differentiated from the surrounding subsoil due to the presence of tiny charcoal and cremation specks. As would become clear later (2009), the (infamous) tree trunk had strongly disturbed two burials (Graves 10 and 17). As we were simultaneously working on multiple levels in 2008, S10 was at the time recorded as a separate feature. However, when S10 is projected under S3 (Grave 10), both features

turn out to be located at roughly the same spot in the mound, just at different levels. This makes it highly likely that S10 is not a separate grave, but rather a small part of the disturbed Grave 10 (S3).

In contrast to most of the features described in this section, S15 was in fact a convincing pit. The feature was encountered in 2008 while excavating from Level 5 to 6 and was clearly visible thanks to its dark grey colour. The many charcoal fragments present in the pit caused this dark grey colour. It is striking that the pit was definitely completely absent in Level 5. The mound body therefore must have covered this pit. In Level 6 the pit had a long, oval shape some 75 centimetres in length and over 50 centimetres in width. While sectioning the feature it proved to have an irregular bowl-shape (Fig. 9.22). The pit extended another 35 centimetres underneath



**Fig. 9.22:** Section S15. Photograph taken facing west.

Level 6 and had two fills. The inner, likewise bowl-shaped centre (Fill 1) was 25 centimetres in diameter and 22 centimetres deep. The surrounding, other fill of the pit was designated Fill 2 as a whole. Both fills were lightly gravelly, somewhat loamy sand. The inner fill (1) differed from the outer fill (2) in that it was somewhat more homogenous in colour. Both fills were designated as lightly or somewhat humus-rich, likely appearing so as a result of the many charcoal particles. The feature was completely sieved (mesh width 3 mm), whereby no finds other than some larger charcoal lumps (37 gr.) were done. The function of the pit remains unclear. As not a single fragment of burnt bone was encountered in the pit fill, it cannot be established whether we are dealing with the remains of a pyre, leaving several options. The charcoal from the pit was unfortunately not <sup>14</sup>C-dated, so with regards to its age it can only be stated that the feature must predate the erection of Mound 3.

When digging a small profile section pit alongside the southern profile in 2008 to gain a quick impression of mound, two very vague, red-brown features (S16 and S17) were encountered at the depth of what would later be Level 8. Both features were excavated and recorded in 2008. At the time, S17 was already considered doubtful due to its shallow depth (8 cm) and very irregular shape. S16 in contrast was somewhat more regular in shape and extended another 20 centimetres in depth, and at the time was recorded as a small pit. The eventual Level 8 (far underneath the mound) was only dug late in 2009 and revealed several such 'features'. They were all red-brown, irregular features that showed up due to the contrast they made with the surrounding, light, coarse gravelly sand. Such 'features' were also encountered underneath Mound 2 (see also Section 8.3.2) and were interpreted as natural phenomena. In hindsight S16 very likely also falls into this category of pseudo-features.

The next feature (S19) has already been mentioned in the description of Grave 11 (S6). It is a charcoal concentration located directly northeast of the cremation grave in question. The concentration itself was modest in diameter (20 cm) and extended another 10 centimetres under Level 5. Like with Grave 11, it seems that bioturbation is responsible for distributing small charchaol specks outside the original concentration of 20 centimetres, forming the aforementioned 'aureole' around the original feature. This was some 50 centimetres in cross-section. In this manner S19 became 'attached' to S6 (Grave 11) while they are in fact separate features.

The last feature is a large pit (S28) uncovered far outside (several metres) the western foot of the mound while digging Level 7. As with the natural features S16 and S17, this also concerned a red-brown feature that contrasted well with the surrounding light, coarse gravelly sand. A big difference with the other red-brown, natural features, however, was its size (85 cm in diameter) and the presence of charcoal specks in the fill. The cross-section of the pit was a regular bowl-shape, which at its deepest point extended 28 centimetres underneath Level 7. Whether in this case we are dealing with an anthropogenic pit remains the question. It is worth noting, for example, that the many small roots that extend to the bottom of the pit more or less follow the shape of the pit. A small tree fall into which some very small charcoal specks blew, would be as plausible an explanation for the appearance and contents of the pit as human intervention.

In summary, of the category 'other features', only the pit with charcoal (S15) and the charcoal concentration by Grave 11 (S19) can definitely be considered anthropogenic. All remaining features in this category appear to more likely be natural in origin or are fragments of strongly disturbed archaeological contexts like S8 and S10.

## 9.4 Find material

### 9.4.1 Pottery

In terms of weight, the amount of prehistoric pottery found in Mound 3 is almost exactly the same as in Mound 2: 229 grams (17 find numbers). Of this 130 grams originates from a single feature (S12, Grave 13). The other sherds, with the exception of one small fragment (V481), are all loose finds from the mound body. The mentioned sherd V481 likely originates from Grave 16, but cannot be ascribed to this burial with any certainty.

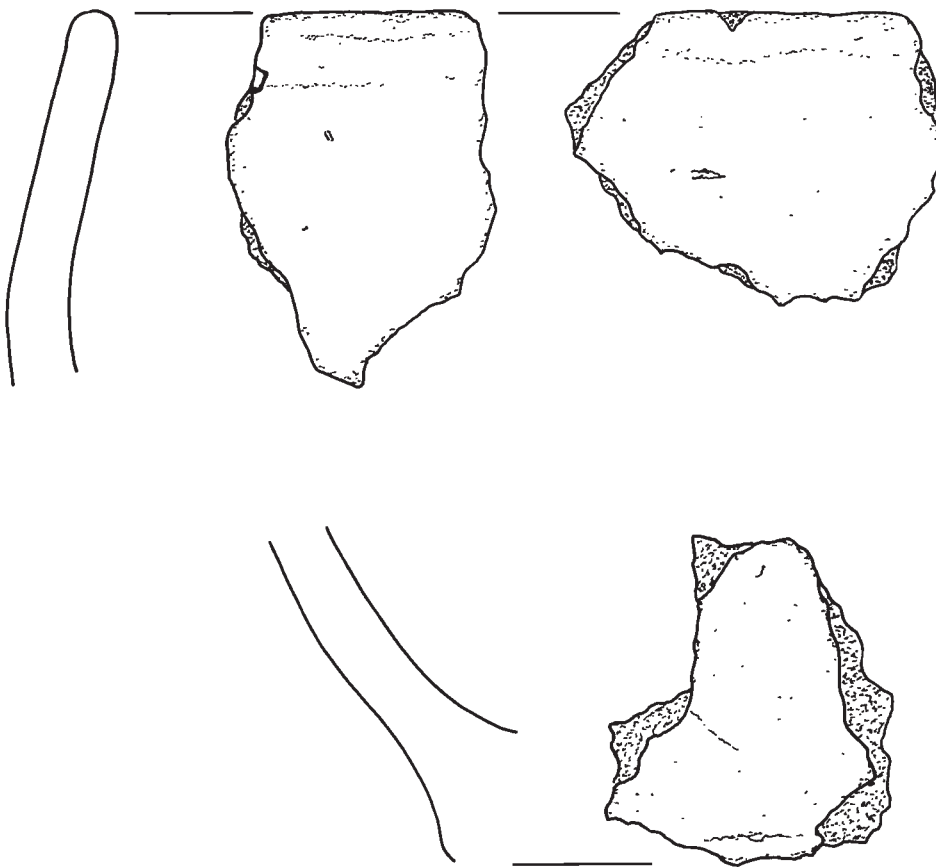
#### Pottery from Grave 13

In total eight loose sherds were found spread throughout Grave 13 (V248, V249, V250, V251, V252, V323, V366 and V375), which can all be identified as being from the same vessel based on their paste. A ninth sherd (V114) was encountered earlier outside of the feature and it is without a doubt from the same vessel. The rounded and oxidized fracture planes confirm that the pot was broken prior to being exposed to fire, possibly on the pyre. The pottery is beige/light brown in colour. On a recent break, however, there is a dark grey colour visible. This means that only the exterior surfaces were oxidized and were likely much

darker in colour in an earlier stage. The pottery is more solid than that from Mounds 1 and 2 and tempered with a combination of finely powdered granite-/quartz (1–2 mm) and grog. The thickness of the wall is 7–8 millimetres. Both the interior as exterior surface is smoothly finished. One fragment (V249) even still shows fine lines of a cloth (or fingers) used to smooth the exterior surface. The sherds show no indications of rim or wall decorations. Neither a complete profile nor the diameter could be reconstructed. Nonetheless, one of the rim sherds does confirm it to originally have been a weakly profiled, neckless vessel with a high shoulder (see Fig. 9.23). Such a shape is not uncommon for the Middle Bronze Age, which conforms well with the <sup>14</sup>C-dating of cremation remains from Grave 13.

#### Sherds from the mound body and the old surface

As a slip finish is considered characteristic of Iron Age pottery (Van den Broeke 2005, 608), three sherds from the top of Mound 3 (V6, V12 and V767) form the first (and only) convincing indications of human activity at the location of the Wieselseweg barrows during the Iron Age. All three sherds were encountered high in the mound body.



**Fig. 9.23:** Pottery from Grave 13 (scale 1:1).

It is therefore well possible that the sherds ended up in the barrow from the surface through ‘trampling’ or the rooting wild boars. However, it cannot be excluded that that the sherds represent secondary burials from the Iron Age that were disturbed. Two of the three sherds, V12 and V767 (Fig. 9.24b) appear very similar and were both found along the southern profile section. It is therefore well possible that they are from the same pot. They are tempered with medium-coarse quartz (3 mm), between 8 and 9 millimetres thick and orange/light brown in colour. The third sherd (V6) has the same colour and thickness but a different temper: small pieces of gravel. The slip of this sherd is also much finer and the interior surface is much coarser when compared with the other sherds. Moreover, the V6 sherd is weathered, while sherds V12 and V767 have old but straight fracture planes. It is clear that the three Iron Age sherds originate from at least two vessels.

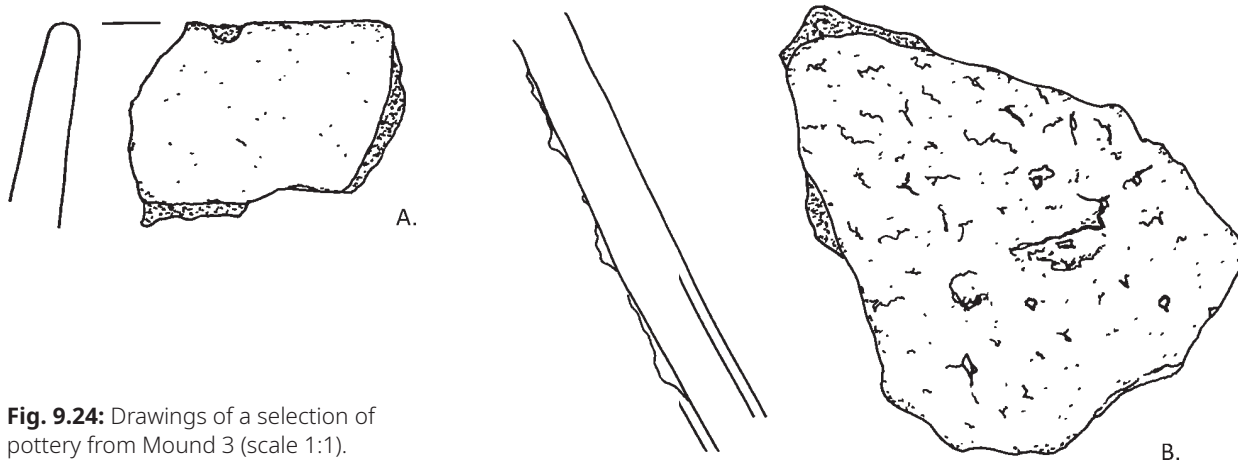
The next two sherds (V24 and V26) both were found while digging Level 4. The first fragment (V26) was found by Grave 13 and is a rim fragment with a relatively small wall thickness (5–6 mm; Fig. 9.24a). The shape and temper (finely crushed granite) is consistent with the two rim

fragments found in Grave 13, but the firing conditions and surface finish differ. Both the interior and exterior surface of the sherd are rougher than those found in Grave 13 and the colour of the pottery, grey brown to dark grey at the core, reveal that they were fired under reduction, more so than the pottery in Grave 13. Given the shallow depth of the find underneath the current (and old) surface it should be taken into consideration that the sherd could have ended up in its find location in several different ways. The second fragment was found slightly more towards the centre of the mound and is strongly weathered. The paste is tempered with crushed stone and 7 millimetres thick. The exterior surface is rough, oxidized and beige/light brown in colour, while the core and interior surface are dark grey. Both fragments offer no clues to date them any more narrowly than prehistoric.

The final two pottery fragments (V94 and V112) were found at least 80 centimetres from each other, but do fit together. The sherds were found while digging Level 5 at the depth of the old surface. They are a relatively hard paste, tempered with medium coarse quartz (2–4 mm). The sherds are 8–9 millimetres thick, entirely beige/light brown

F. no.	Trench	Level	S	N	Wght.	Pot section	Temper	Surf. fin.	Thickness	Firing cond.
6	301	2	999	1	12.5	Wall	Gravel	Slip	8-9 mm	Ox
12	301	2	999	1	17.3	Wall	Crushed quartz	Slip	9 mm	Ox
24	301	4	999	1	6.3	Wall	Crushed quartz	Rough	7 mm	Red (Ox)
26	301	4	999	1	7.5	Rim	Crushed stone, CBDF	Smooth	5-6 mm	Red (Ox)
94	301	5	999	1	13.0	Wall	Crushed quartz	Slip	8-9 mm	Ox
112	301	5	999	1	5.2	Wall	Gravel	Smooth	8 mm	Ox
114	301	5	999	1	12.5	Wall	Crushed stone, CBDF	Smooth	7 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
248	301	5	12	1	15.3	Rim	Crushed quartz/granite	Smooth	7-8 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
249	301	5	12	1	19.6	Rim	Crushed quartz/granite	Smooth	8 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
250	301	5	12	1	25.4	Wall/base	Crushed quartz/granite	Smooth	7-15 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
251	301	5	12	1	14.0	Wall	Crushed quartz/granite	Smooth	6 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
252	301	5	12	1	9.3	Wall	Crushed granite	Smooth	8 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
323	301	5	12	1	5.3	Wall	Crushed quartz/granite	Smooth	8 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
366	301	5	12	1	8.8	Wall	Crushed granite	Smooth	8 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
375	301	5	12	1	16.5	Wall/base	Crushed granite/pottery	Smooth	8-15 mm	Ox-Red-Ox
481	301	6	22	1	1.6	Wall	Indet.	Smooth	4-5 mm	Red
767	301	999	999	1	35.0	Wall	Crushed quartz	Slip	8 mm	Ox-Red

**Tab. 9.2:** Overview characteristics of the pottery from Mound 3. Explanation abbreviations: F.no. = find number; S = Feature number (*spoor* in Dutch); N = number of sherds; Wght. = weight in grams; Surf. fin. = surface finish exterior; Firing cond. = firing conditions. Explanation other abbreviations and codes: Indet. = indeterminable; CBDF = cannot be determined further; 999 = not applicable; Ox = oxidizing; Red = reduction fire. Other notes: 1.) when a number is listed with a pot section (for example 1 Rim), this means that the other fragments with the same find number cannot be identified. 2.) The firing circumstances are listed from the exterior surface to the interior surface: exterior – centre – interior. If only two variables are listed, the centre is included with the surfaces. If the firing conditions are listed between brackets (for example Ox (Red)) this means that the firing circumstances were primarily oxidising but that there are also reduction zones present and vice versa.



**Fig. 9.24:** Drawings of a selection of pottery from Mound 3 (scale 1:1).

in colour and have strongly weathered fracture planes. The exterior surface has a light slip, which indicates a typological date in the Iron Age. This date has consequences with regards to the origin of the sherds as they were found near the old surface and all the Mound 3 graves date to the Middle Bronze Age A. The sherds therefore must have worked their way into the mound from outside of it. Given the exact location of the sherds, 5–6 metres outside the centre of the barrow, this is well possible. Also the strongly weathered breaks indicate that the sherds moved around before ending up at their eventual find location.

#### 9.4.2 Flint & stone

For Mound 3 a total of 48 find numbers were assigned in the category 'stone'. Also for Mound 3 it is true that 'likely' stones were collected as a precaution and examined in detail upon conclusion of the fieldwork. After analysis a substantial number of find numbers (32) were discarded as the stones proved to be pseudo-artefacts. These finds now labelled 'natural' are not discussed further. The remaining finds are described per context in the following. Here it once again will be noted that many of the finds were done in grave fills. As with Mounds 1 and 2, the sieving of the grave contents is the cause of the concentrated distribution of stone finds done here.

##### Flint from Grave 10

Among the cremation remains from Grave 10, four burnt flint fragments were found while sieving: V28, V40 and V722 (2 pieces). Of the larger fragment, the largest diameter is 22 millimetres. On all four fragments fracture planes caused by frost fission or heat are present. While it is clear that these are not worked flints, it is striking that four burnt fragments were found so close together. It is possible that they were taken to be cremation remains due to their white colour and shrinkage fissures and as such were collected from the pyre location and transported to Mound 3 with the cremation remains.

##### Flint stone from Grave 11

A burnt '*Maaseitje*' ('Meuse egg') was found (V144) while deepening Grave 11 by hand in spits. This rolled flint measures 29 × 26 × 24 millimetres, is broken open halfway and strongly weathered and crushed around the break surface. The many fracture planes are all rounded and appear to be natural in origin rather than the result of any kind of human intervention. The only possibly anthropogenic features on the stone, are those of burning, which could even be natural in origin. But as with Grave 10, it can be considered striking that the burnt stone was found in a context in which burning played an important role.

##### Flint from Grave 13

A total of five flint fragments were collected from the fill of Grave 13. The largest diameter of the largest example is 26 millimetres. The other four fragments are significantly smaller (largest diameters < 17 mm). None of these five fragments show clear signs of working. They did all five show signs of frost fission or splitting due to heat. The flint of V253 and V301 has turned white and has shrinkage cracks, showing they were clearly burned. Two other fragments are completely (V369) or partially (V254) milky white in colour. It is possible this colour also results from burning. These two fragments, however, show no signs of shrinkage cracks or potlits. Finally, the flint of V419 is red-brown in colour and is the only example that is clearly not burnt. Once again it is the question here whether the flints are actually part of Grave 13. The flint of V419 shows no signs of working or burning and therefore likely will have been already present in the natural subsoil. The other four fragments, however, are so white that they could easily have been mistaken for burnt bone and interred with cremation remains Grave 13. The fragments of V253 and V301, moreover, are very strongly burnt. Additionally, similar fragments were also found in Graves 10 and 11.

One other noteworthy stone find was done in the fill of Grave 13. It concerns a fragment of quartzite sandstone (V367) with a sharp and angular fracture pattern similar to the stones found in the pits underneath Mound 1. As has been extensively argued in Section 7.4.2, such fracture patterns can only occur in stone when it is heated to a high temperature and then rapidly cooled down. The stone cannot handle the internal tension and fractures. While it is only one such stone, it is striking that a similar stone pops up in a context that is consistent with the remarkable phenomenon underneath Mound 1 in terms of its date. Three similar finds were also done in Grave 4 (Mound 2; Section 8.4.2), and as will become clear in the following, Grave 13 is not the only context of Mound 3 to yield burnt stone.

#### Flint from Grave 18

A fragment of burnt flint (V635) was also found among the cremation remains in Grave 18. The fracture planes were caused by freeze-thawing and/or heat. In any case, it is not a worked piece of flint. The small fragment was collected outside of the orb-cremation of Grave 18, and was therefore probably present in the natural subsoil before Grave 18 was dug.

#### Flint and stone finds Mound 3

A small flint core (V3) was found in the top of the mound while digging the first excavation level. The small core measures 17 × 20 × 12 millimetres and is a homogenous dark grey colour. One facet still has a small bit of rounded cortex in the same colour. This indicates that it is rolled flint, which was likely locally collected. Given the location of the find in the top of the mound, it is difficult to determine the core's origin. It is possible that it came along with the sods that the mound was (likely) constructed with or was later worked into the mound from the top.

A burned and broken piece of quartzite sandstone was also collected under the same find number (V3). As with the flint core this could have ended up in its eventual location in the top of the mound in several different ways.

In addition to the two finds done in the top of the mound, two stone finds were done at the depth of the old surface. The first find (V85, Level 5) is a small flint flake (18 × 11 × 4.5 mm) with a milk white colour. The second find (V389) is yet again a fragment of heated and rapidly cooled fractured quartzite sandstone. This example still has part of the original smooth exterior surface of the pebble. One facet is an older fracture plane which has already become somewhat rounded. The four other facets have the same typical straight and angular fracture pattern as the stones underneath Mound 1. As was already noted earlier in this section, it is difficult to state whether we are dealing with a similar ritual as suggested for Mound 1 based on only a few loose stones. Nonetheless, it is very much a striking

phenomenon that such stones also turned up in Mounds 2 and 3. It cannot be excluded that we in fact are dealing with the remains of a similar ritual.

## 9.5 Phasing and dating

### 9.5.1 Events precedent the erection of Mound 3

With the exception of the various burials, few indications of human activities were found in and under Mound 3. The only feature under Mound 3 that cannot be linked directly to a grave is the bowl-shaped pit with charcoal fragments (S15; Section 9.3.2) to the south of the centre of the mound. The function of the pit is difficult to establish and unfortunately no <sup>14</sup>C-date is available for this feature. What is clear is that the feature is covered by the barrow and therefore must predate it. It is, however, equally possible that it is a Mesolithic hearth as a feature related to the barrow.

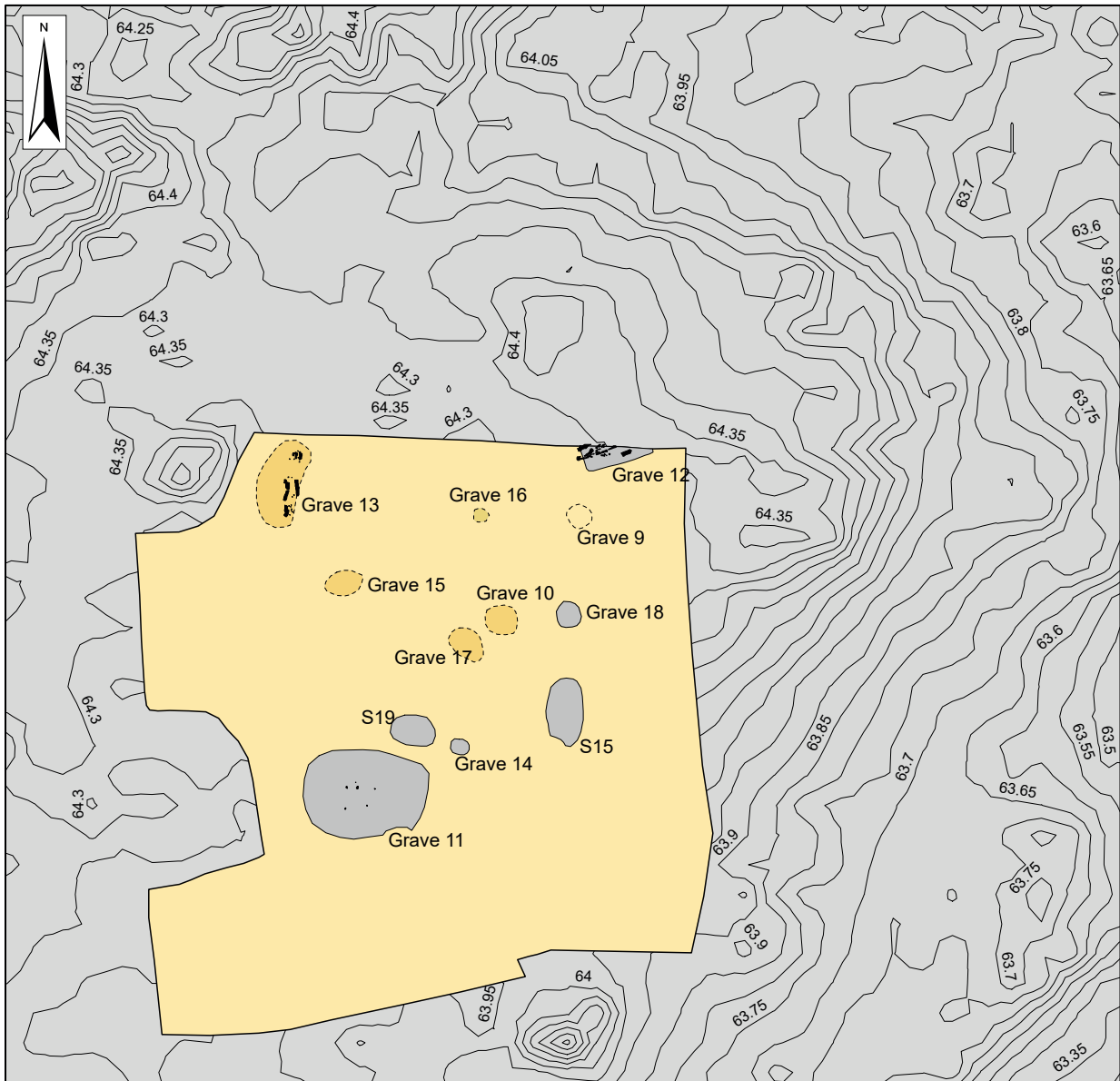
A second feature that cannot be directly linked to a grave is the charcoal concentration (S19; Section 9.3.2) northeast of Grave 11. This feature, however, was located so far outside of the centre of the mound that it was not possible to stratigraphically determine whether the mound covered it or whether it originally lay outside of it. Unfortunately there is also no <sup>14</sup>C-date of the charcoal available. While it is argued above that the charcoal concentration cannot be linked with the close by Grave 11 (or Grave 14), it cannot be excluded that it related to one of the cremation burials.

A final event predating the construction of Mound 3 is formed by the precipitation of charcoal specks at the depth of the old surface. It is possible that these charcoal fragments originated from a nearby funerary pyre and were blown in this direction by the wind. It was thanks to these small charcoal fragments that we were able to recognise the old surface underneath the mound.

### 9.5.2 The sequence of the burials

Bone material from all ten cremation graves found in the southwest quadrant of Mound 3 was <sup>14</sup>C-dated. In addition charcoal from two of the burials was also dated (Tab. 9.3). All ten graves proved to date to the Middle Bronze Age A. Once again the various graves so clearly date together that no sequence of events can be reconstructed based on <sup>14</sup>C-dates alone. In only a few cases do the stratigraphic positions of the various graves provide insights into the order in which graves were created. When the position of the graves in relation to the mound body is taken into account, this yields comparable results as with Mound 2.

Graves 9 and 10, for example, were found so high in the mound body that they must be secondary burials dug into the mound body. Of the other graves, the barrow undoubtedly covers only Grave 12. Graves 11 and 13, which manifested at the same depth as Grave 12, were



**Legend**

- Charred wood
- Grave
- Grave; pit not visible
- Grave/feature
- Trench 301



**Fig. 9.25:** Compilation field drawing Mound 3.

located so far outside of the centre of the barrow that they originally could not have been in or under the mound. How these graves then relate to Grave 13 located under the centre of the mound therefore cannot be determined based on stratigraphy. Then there are the five smaller pits with concentrations of cremation remains, which all only became visible from the level of the old surface

(Graves 14–18). Grave 14 was located directly to the east of Grave 11 and therefore most likely also originally lay outside of the barrow. Graves 15, 16 and 17 could both be secondary burials dug deep into the barrow or burials dug into the old surface. It remains striking that they only became visible from the depth of the old surface onwards. Finally, Grave 18 was located so deep under

**Tab. 9.3:** Overview <sup>14</sup>C-dates of the graves in Mound 3. See also Table 2.1.

Context	Feature no.	Find no.	Lab code	BP	Cal BC 1σ (68.2%)	Cal BC 2σ (95.4%)
Grave 9	301.20	11	GrA-51589	3240 ± 35	1600–1451	1611–1439
Grave 10	301.30	722	GrA-51963	3360 ± 30	1688–1622	1742–1546
Grave 11	301.60	443	GrN-32577	3305 ± 20	1617–1535	1631–1521
Grave 11	301.60	409	GrA-51951	3395 ± 30	1740–1644	1756–1620
Grave 12	301.70	664	GrN-32579	3345 ± 20	1662–1616	1728–1546
Grave 12	301.70	700	GrA-51953	3340 ± 30	1683–1565	1729–1531
Grave 13	301.12	419	GrA-51721	3325 ± 35	1658–1534	1690–1513
Grave 14	301.18	332	GrA-51952	3330 ± 30	1661–1546	1689–1528
Grave 15	301.22	452	GrA-51710	3370 ± 35	1730–1623	1749–1546
Grave 16	301.23	378	GrA-51696	3345 ± 35	1688–1565	1737–1530
Grave 17	301.24	734	GrA-51701	3385 ± 35	1736–1636	1769–1565
Grave 18	301.26	678	GrA-51719	3365 ± 35	1727–1620	1746–1535

**Tab. 9.4:** Relationship between the graves of Mound 3 and the mound body.

	Prior to erection of the mound	Secondary burial	No stratigraphical relationship	Relationship uncertain
Grave 9		X		
Grave 10		X		
Grave 11			X	X
Grave 12	X			
Grave 13			X	X
Grave 14			X	X
Grave 15				X
Grave 16				X
Grave 17				X
Grave 18				X

the mound and the old surface (Level 7!) that it seems very unlikely that this burial is a secondary burial dug through the mound body. Though still, even for Grave 18 this possibility cannot be excluded.

In summary, Grave 12 is a candidate for primary central burial of Mound 3, and Graves 9 and 10 appear to be secondary burials in the mound body (Fig. 9.25). How the other seven graves temporally relate to the primary central burial remains difficult to ascertain (Tab. 9.4). This will be addressed further in the concluding discussion of this chapter.

### 9.5.3 Iron Age

Various pottery sherds with slips (Dutch: *bismeten*) were found in the upper layers of the mound body (both in the top and around the foot of the barrow). The two clearest examples were found close together in the top of the mound, to the south of the centre. It is possible that these are the remains of an Iron Age urn present in one of the unexcavated quadrants that was ploughed apart. They, however, could also be the leftovers of other activities. In Rhenen, for example, loose Iron Age sherds were also found in the top of an Early Bronze Age barrow which

were clearly not from a grave (Bourgeois *et al.* 2010a, 74–6). Exactly which activity the Iron Age sherds in the top of Mound 3 reflect, unfortunately remains unclear. In any case, it is apparent that the Wieselseweg were also visited by people during the Iron Age and likely were also recognized as burial mounds at that time.

## 9.6 Conclusion

### 9.6.1 Concluding remarks

Mound 3 is small barrow some 50 centimetres high, 8 to 9 metres in diameter and dates to the Middle Bronze Age A. The irregular shape of the present-day mound body appears to be the result of 20<sup>th</sup> century disturbances. Thanks to this irregular shape, the excavated southwest quadrant may have covered more than just the southwest quarter. No sods or mound phases could be discerned due to the strongly weathered soil. In total ten cremation burials were found, which also were all dated to Middle Bronze Age A. The nature and distribution of the graves of Mound 3 are strongly reminiscent of nearby Mound 2. At Mound 3 the various graves are distributed throughout and underneath the mound body and it remains very



**Fig. 9.26:** Visualization of Mound 3. The white figures represent the individuals identified through the excavation. Figure by S. van der Vaart-Verschoof.

much the question whether all graves were originally covered by the barrow (Graves 11 and 13). Once again the possibility should be taken into consideration that the barrow itself formed a monumentalization of an existing cemetery. How the various graves exactly relate to each other and to the mound body is difficult to determine due to the weathered soils and lack of stratigraphic insights. Grave 12 in any case is clearly covered by the barrow, and Graves 9 and 10 in turn reflect secondary burials in the mound body. For the other seven graves no definitive answer can be given. A number of pottery sherds with slips were found spread out through the barrow reveal that Mound 3 was also visited in the Iron Age. The nature of the activities that took place at this location during the Iron Age is likewise difficult to determine. It is possible that the sherds originate from a secondary burial that was ploughed apart, although it is not unusual to find Iron Age sherds to be found loose in older barrows.

### 9.6.2 Funerary ritual

All burials of Mound 3 are also cremation graves and once again different forms can be discerned. In three graves suspected pyre remains play an important role: large amounts of charcoal were found both in the centrally located Grave 12 as in the more peripherally positioned Graves 11 and 13. In Graves 12 and 13 it was even possible to discern multiple small charred beams. In Grave 11 and 12 cremation remains and suspected pyre remains were placed next to each other in a pit. The cremation remains in these graves were distributed in swatches of 15–20 centimetres wide and 100 centimetres long. They were not in their anatomically correct position. It is suspected that they were strewn into a burial pit or placed into the grave in an elongated container. In Grave 13 there once again seems to have once been a certain ordering of cremation remains and (suspected) pyre remains, but

this was disturbed by ploughing activities in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. In any case, the bottom of the elongated burial pit appears to have been ‘paved’ with charcoal and the cremation remains strewn over this. Several pottery sherds were also found spread out through the burial pit. These sherds are all from the same pot, which was fragmented prior to burial. Grave 13 is the only grave of Mound 3 to feature pottery. Graves 11, 12 and 13 have relatively large burial pits ( $\pm 100$  cm in length).

For at least six of the remaining seven graves it can be stated that we are dealing with significantly smaller burial pits (in as far as can be reconstructed: 20–50 cm in cross-section) and, in contrast to Graves 11, 12 and 13, that charcoal played no important role in their final creation. Grave 9 is too disturbed to make any such statements about, but it is clear that the cremation remains were located so high in the mound body that it has to be a (disturbed) secondary burial. Regarding the other six graves, only in Grave 18 could a clear compact ‘orb’ of cremation remains be discerned which matched the size of the pit in terms of its dimensions. The cremation remains were probably packed in an organic container and placed on the bottom of a small pit. Graves 10 and 17 could have been similar in grave form but were both heavily disturbed by the roots of the tree trunk located in the centre of the quadrant. The other graves (14, 15 and 16) all yielded more diffuse distributions of cremation remains throughout the pit. None of these seven graves yielded grave goods.

Even though more differences can be discerned between the various cremation graves of Mound 3 it is still likely that members of the same community were buried here. The <sup>14</sup>C-dates of the various graves lie so close together that the dead could have known each other in life. They also reflect the sex and age of a local community or even household, more so than at Mound 2: men, women and children are all represented.

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