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## Suspected Iron Age Enclosures in the Cologne Basin

Nearly two decades of aerial exploration of the Rhineland have revealed a large number of archaeological sites, previously unknown and unsuspected. Most of these are of well-known type. A very few can only be judged by their shape, and in the absence of excavation evidence, estimates of age are speculative. Nonetheless, it is worth calling attention to a few sites with unusual features here since previous publications have appeared in very out-of-the-way places and the archaeological community is largely unaware of them.

The sites in question are all irregularly rectangular in shape. Some of them have rounded corners, and some are square. The sides are not very straight, and they entirely lack the precision of the Roman sites in the same area. They are unlike the 'Grabgärten' type of celtic square tumulus which have been found in great quantities in the Eifel-Hunsrück region (Decker, Scollar 1962), and in smaller quantities in the Cologne Basin (Scollar 1968). The sites reported here are usually much larger, the biggest well exceeding 100 meters in side length. No two are exactly the same shape either. They are not nearly as regular as the bavarian 'Viereckschanzen' which are similar in size. Mistakenly, some of them were included in the distribution map of (Scollar 1968) reproduced here as Fig. 1.

Only two of the sites are completely visible, one near Lommersum (Fig. 2) the other near Miel (Fig. 3). Both are situated on slightly elevated gravel ridges, and in the second, there is clear evidence of internal structure, probably a small rectangular building, with only the roof-supporting post holes of two concentric rectangles visible from the air. This site is the only one with an entrance which is visible from the air. The entrance curves slightly inwards and is located asymmetrically in one of the shorter sides near the corner.

Two much larger enclosures, one of them similar in shape to that at Miel were found at Weidesheim (Fig. 4 and 5) and published very obscurely (Scollar 1970). They were mapped magnetically and the magnetic plots from the computer are shown in Fig. 6 and 7. The overall plan is seen in Fig. 8. Barrow circles and a few rare surface sherds of early iron age date are also present, although these may be unrelated in date to the sites themselves. All of the air visible features appear in the magnetic plots. In addition, in one of the sites (Fig. 6) an entrance in the side of the long ditch can be seen clearly. The other circular markings in the plots are mostly due to iron fragments of modern date, and one large bomb crater can be seen in

Fig. 7. Numerous corroded gun cartridges were found on the surface as well. In Fig. 8 it can be seen that the sites, here with airphoto and magnetic data combined, occupy quite a large area.

A much smaller enclosure was found near Sievernich. It has the same shape as those at Weidesheim, with rounded corners, as at Miel too. A fragment of a larger one was seen at Langendorf. These are reproduced in Fig. 11 and 9. The first is similar in size to the much more common 'Grabgärten' type, but is more elongated and irregular. The second is only visible on two sides, and it is difficult to say any more about it. Finally a still more irregular enclosure was found at Morschenich (Fig. 10). This last may not be related to the others, but it is included for the sake of completeness. There are a number of other large irregular enclosures in the air photo archives of the Landesmuseum, but they are even more questionable with regard to function and age.

Since none of the sites have been excavated, it is not possible to be sure of their attribution. A comparison with air photo finds made in France (Agache 1976) and sites long known and excavated in England (Cunliffe 1974) leads to the suspicion that we are looking at the remains of ditched or hedged enclosures surrounding Iron age farmsteads or animal enclosures of similar age. Proof of this supposition must await excavation.

*Acknowledgements:* The site at Lommersum was first photographed by C. B. Rüger in 1962, and those at Weidesheim first correctly identified by H. Polenz in 1964 while students under the author's supervision. The others were found by the author in 1962, 1965 and 1970. The magnetic maps at Weidesheim were made on the first field trials of the first fully automatic recording differential proton magnetometer designed at the Landesmuseum by the author and A. Lander, and the field work was carried out in cooperation with R. Linington and B. Pastore of the Fondazione Lerici of Rome in 1966.

#### References

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| Cunliffe 1974        | B. Cunliffe, Iron Age Communities in Britain (1974).  |
| Decker, Scollar 1962 | K. V. Decker and I. Scollar, Iron Age Square Enclosures in the Rhineland. <i>Antiquity</i> 36, 1962, 175-178.                                 |
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| Scollar 1970         | id., A Magnetic Survey at Weidesheim, Kreis Euskirchen. <i>Scritti di Archeologia ed Arte in onore di Carlo Maurilio Lerici</i> (1970) 28-33. |



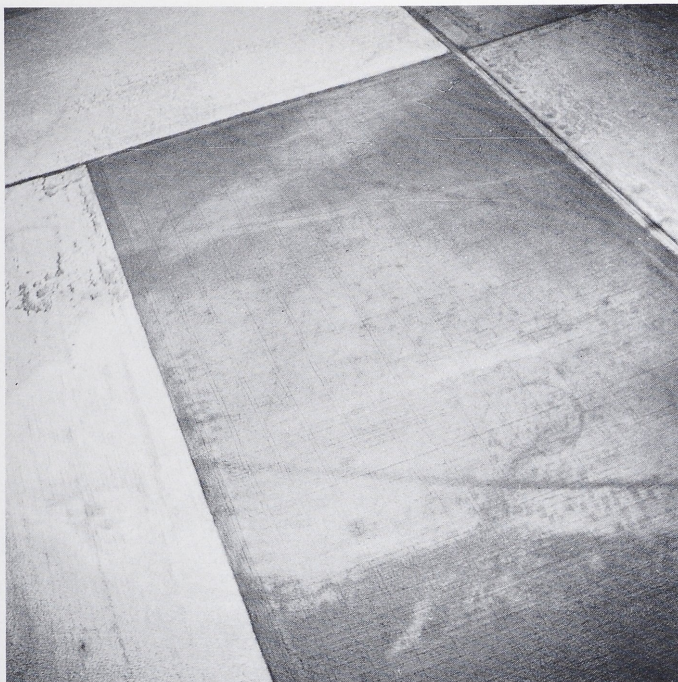
1 Iron age enclosures in the Cologne basin, distribution map.



2 Lommersum, Kr. Euskirchen, 29. 6. 62, Archiv Nr. 66/5. Freigabe-Nr. Reg. Präs. Düsseldorf 16/14/870.



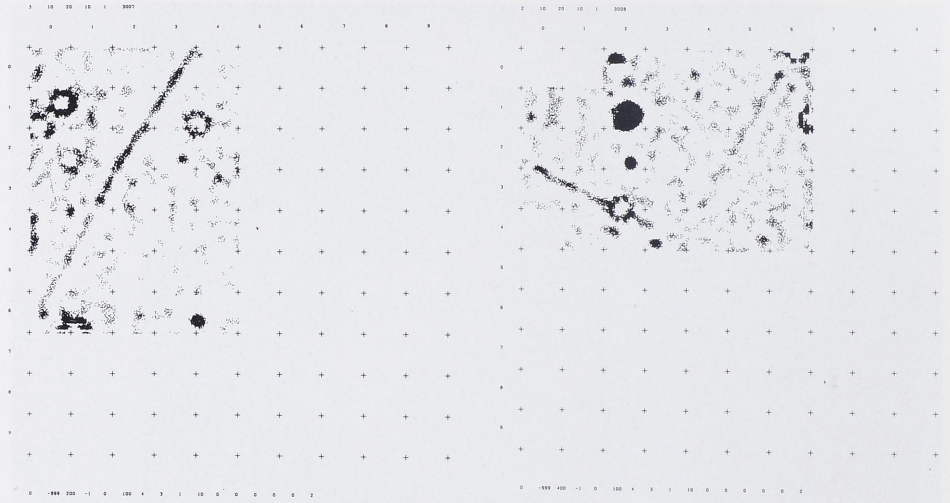
3 Miel, Siegkreis, 14. 7. 64, Archiv Nr. 87/2. Freigabe-Nr. Reg. Präs. Düsseldorf 16/25/3266.



4 Weidesheim, Kr. Euskirchen, 25. 6. 64, Archiv Nr. 84/11.  
Freigabe-Nr. Reg. Präs. Düsseldorf 16/34/7876.

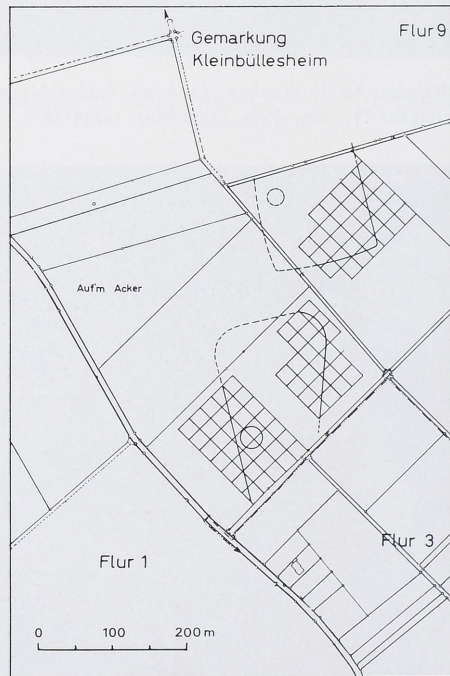


5 Weidesheim, Kr. Euskirchen, 25. 6. 64, Archiv Nr. 84/10.  
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6 Weidesheim, Kr. Euskirchen. Magnetic plot.

7 Weidesheim, Kr. Euskirchen. Magnetic plot.



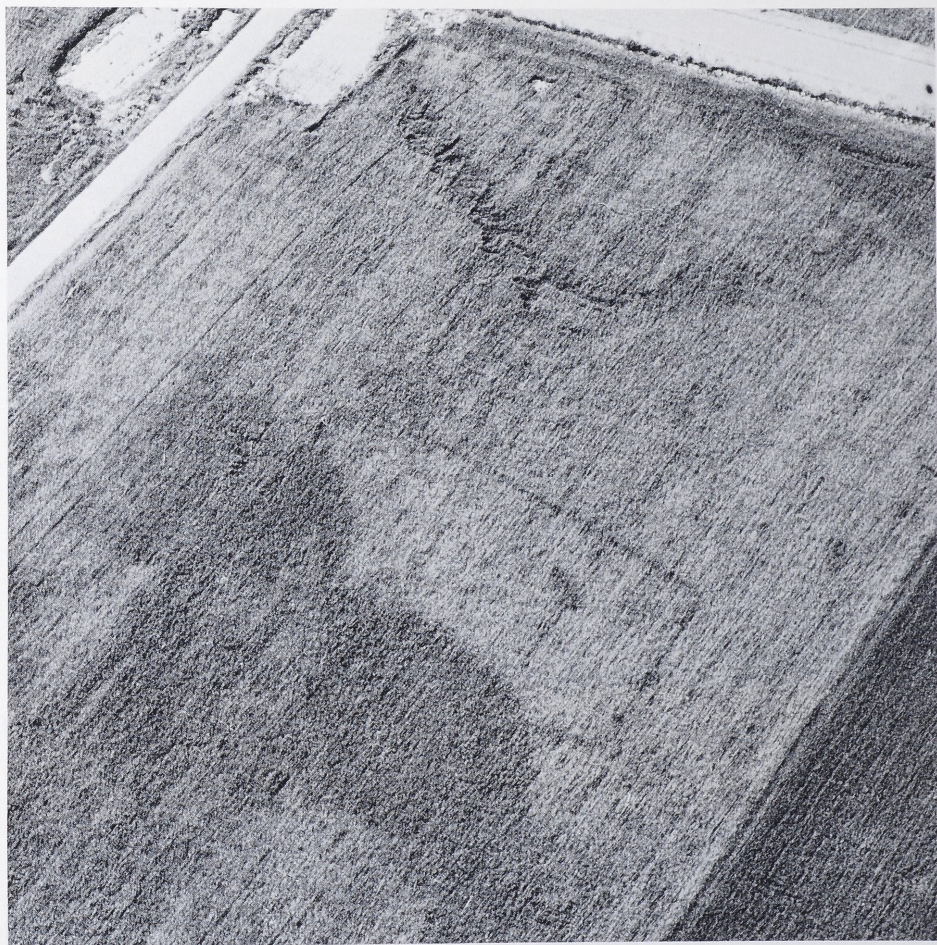
8 Weidesheim, Kr. Euskirchen. Overall plan.



9 Langendorf, Kr. Euskirchen, 6. 6. 62, Archiv Nr. BD21. Freigabe-Nr. Reg. Präs. Düsseldorf 16/22/1210.



10 Morschenich, Kr. Düren, 10. 7. 70, Archiv Nr. HJ 8. Freigabe-Nr. Reg. Präs. Düsseldorf 16B264.



11 Sievernich, Kr. Düren, 21. 6. 65, Archiv Nr. FZ88. Freigabe-Nr. Reg. Präs. Düsseldorf 16/48/8776.