

THE EXCAVATION OF NINE ROMANO-BRITISH BURIALS AT ANDOVER, HAMPSHIRE IN 1984 AND 1987

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ABSTRACT

In 1984, the discovery of a Roman cemetery took place during excavations concerned mainly with the recording of medieval and post-medieval structures on the line of the Southern Distributor Road for Andover. Further work, in 1987, resulted in a total of nine encoffined skeletons being recovered. Seven were from single graves, and two from the same timber-lined mortuary chamber. Grave goods were sparse, but included a 1st or 2nd century flagon, and 4th century coins, knives, bone comb and bracelets. Parallels in grave furniture and grave goods can be found in the extensive cemetery at Lankhills, Winchester.

This report concerns itself solely with the Romano-British burials. The medieval and later evidence, which included a cellar, cesspit and kiln or oven, will be reported on separately. The excavation archive is housed with the County Museums Service as A1984.2.

INTRODUCTION

Early in 1984 a twelve week excavation funded by Hampshire County Council and carried out by staff of the Test Valley Archaeological Trust, aided by the Manpower Services Commission, uncovered part of a late Roman cemetery at Winchester Street, Andover (SU 365 452). The Roman potential of the site was revealed when two graves were located during machine stripping on the line of the proposed road, and confirmed when three more burials were recovered along with coffin nails, hobnails, two iron knives, a bone comb and bone bracelet. In January and February 1987 four more burials were excavated at the edge

of the road verge, prior to landscaping by Hampshire County Council.

The site lies to the south of Andover town centre, just east of the southern arterial road (Fig. 1B). The underlying geology is Upper Chalk, for the most part thinly covered with light soil, with the surrounding hilltops capped with clay-with-flints. The main rivers in the area are the Anton and Pillhill Brook which meet just south of Andover and flow to join the Test at Fullerton. The cemetery lies just to the east of the River Anton with its alluvial and valley gravel soils, and occupies an elevated position on a north facing slope.

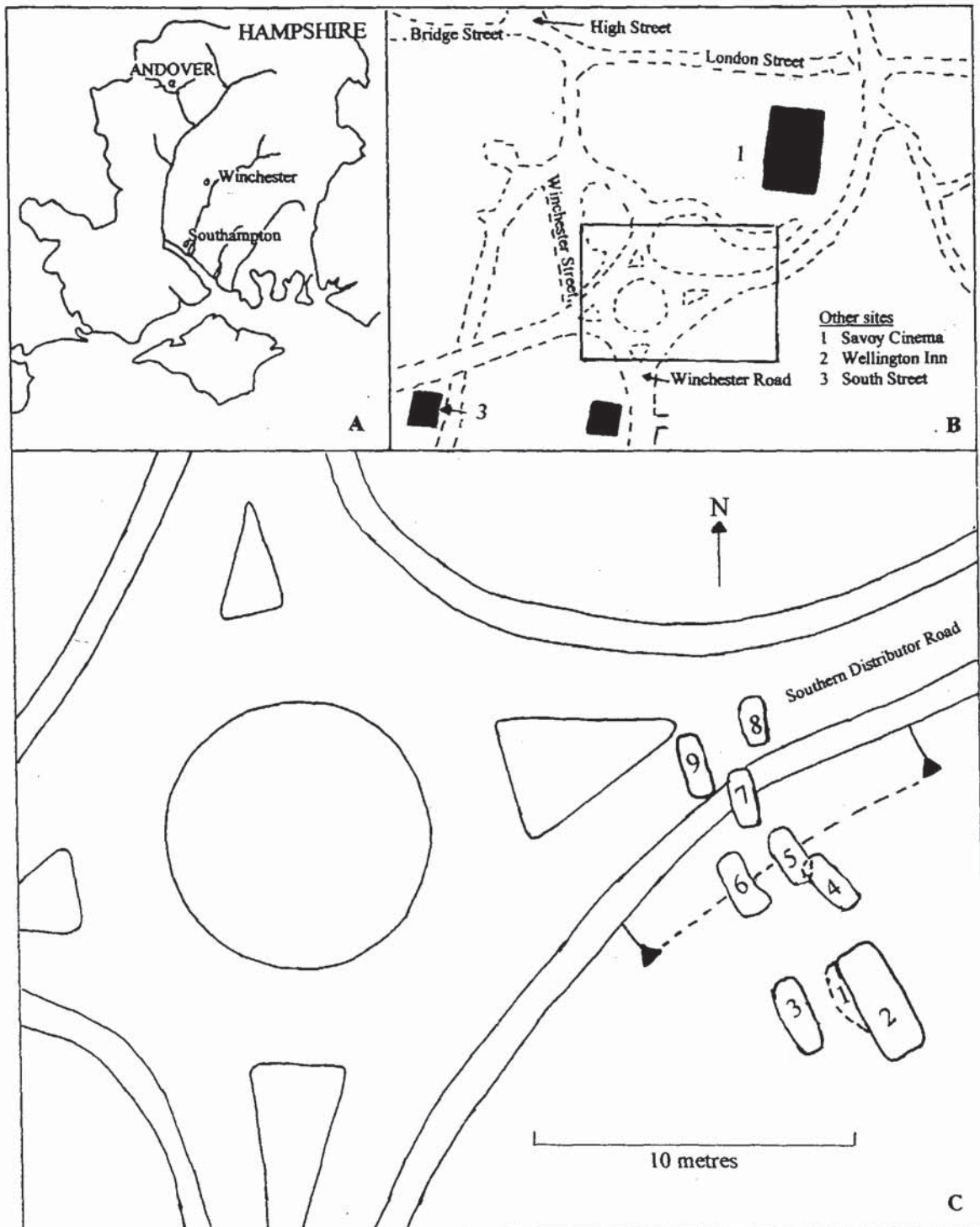
The precise location of the five burials excavated in 1984 (report numbers 5–9) is not known, but it is possible to identify the position of two of the graves (5 & 6) in relation to the four further burials (report numbers 1–4), discovered in 1987. This allows all of the graves to be plotted with some degree of certainty (Fig. 1C).

This report has been prepared with access to the full archive, with the exception of the colour photographic record from the second season of excavation, which could not be located. It makes use of the human bone report prepared for the Museums Service by Sue Anderson (1991, revised 2000) and a pottery report compiled for the Trust by Charlotte Matthews (1997).

THE EXCAVATION

For the purposes of this report the graves and burials have been numbered as shown on the location plan (Fig. 1C). As the graves excavated in

Fig. 1 (*opposite*) Location maps (A–B) and site plan (C) of burials showing location of Graves 1–6 and approximate location of Graves 7–9



1987 were numbered 1-4 by the excavators, and the 1984 graves identified only by their contexts, report numbers 5-9 have been allocated to the earlier discoveries, even though they were found first.

Concordance - Context and Burial Numbers

Graves 5-9 excavated in 1984

<i>Context Nos.</i>	<i>Grave/Burial No.</i>
3000/1	8
3007/8	9
3009/10	7
3024/25	6
3026/27	5

Graves 1-4 excavated in 1987

<i>Context Nos.</i>	<i>Grave/Burial No.</i>
4023/21	1
4023/22	2
4042/41	3
4032/31	4

GRAVE CATALOGUE

The first line of each catalogue entry consists of the grave orientation, where it was established, with the position of the head given first and the grave dimensions.

Grave 1 (Fig. 2)

NW-SE 2.15 × 0.60-0.70 × 1.40 m

Both Graves 1 and 2 were situated in a large pit (context 4023) which contained a timber structure

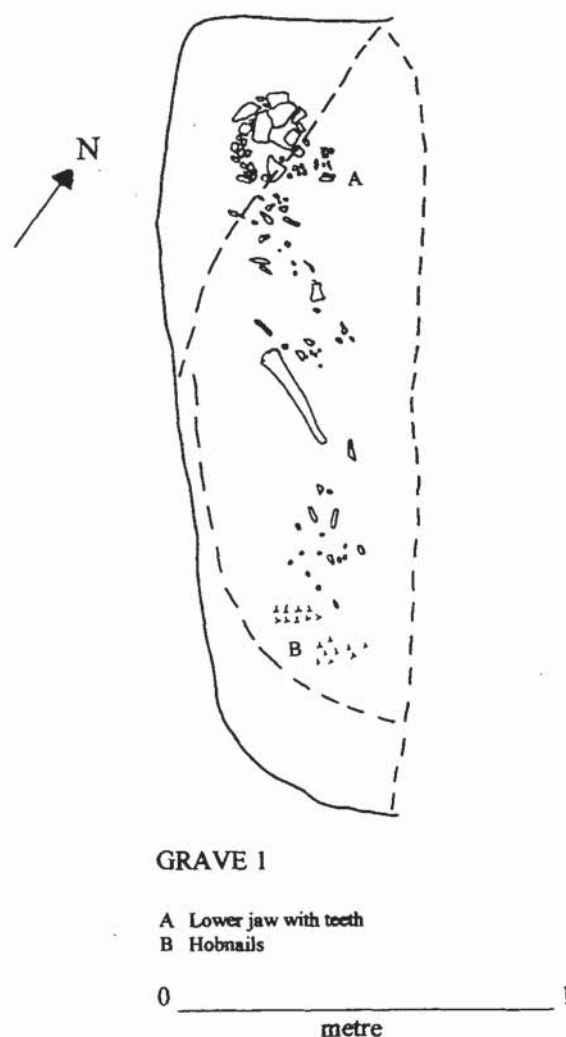
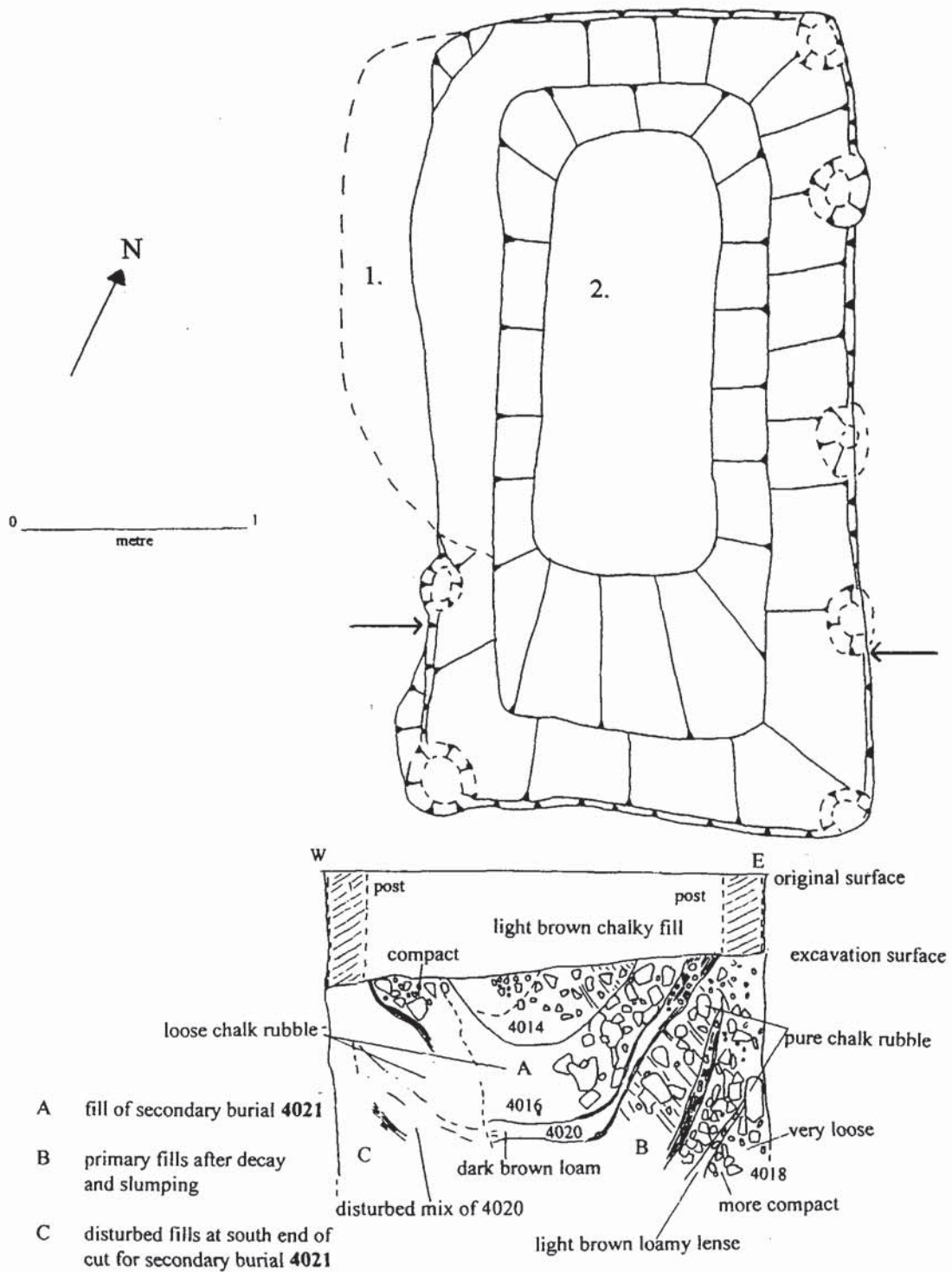


Fig. 2 Plan of Grave 1

interpreted as a mortuary chamber (Figs 3 & 11). Grave 1 was a deliberate insertion into the existing Grave 2. This secondary burial, (Burial 1) was placed in a cavity, which undercut the northern two-thirds of the west side of Pit 4023. It lay parallel to Burial 2, on a ledge approximately 0.15m above the base of the original cut. Burial 1 was a sub-adult of indeterminate sex. The remains were very fragmentary and in poor condition. The burial was crouched and facing east.

Fig. 3 (opposite) Plan and reconstructed section of Pit 4023 (Graves 1 & 2)



One hundred and fifty-one coffin nails (2–152) were recovered from context 4023 belonging to both graves, though the majority were associated with the void left by the decay of the coffin in grave 2.

Grave goods

Hobnails were the only items found with Burial 1 (153–155).

Residual pottery

300 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 2991 grams came from Pit 4023, and one Iron Age sherd from 4016, the backfill of Burial 1.

Grave 2 (Fig. 4)

NW–SE $2.90 \times 1.30 \times 1.85$ m

The primary burial in the mortuary chamber occupied a cut 0.3m deeper than the remainder of Pit 4023, surrounded by a pronounced step. The decay of the coffin left a distinct void, about 60 cm long, stretching to around 1m from the southern end of the pit. It was most noticeable near the south-west corner, showing a clear straight edge. A distinct pattern of coffin nails was associated with the void. Chalk rubble was packed around the coffin, but in the area where it had collapsed loam and rubble fill was noted. The primary burial was of a young adult male, preserved as an almost complete skeleton in fair to good condition. Stature was recorded as 170.7 cm from the left femur and tibia. The body was supine, with the upper part of the torso disturbed. The feet may also have been disturbed.

Grave goods

A pottery flagon of 1st or 2nd century AD date had been placed near the feet. The almost complete vessel was a developed ring-necked flagon with a strap handle (Figs 15, 2a). Two groups of hobnails were present nearby (153–155).

Grave 3 (Fig. 5)

NW–SE $2.305 \times 0.80 \times 1.00$ m

The sides of Grave 3 were almost vertical with the exception of the top of the eastern side, which had a gradual slope. Three fills were recorded: chalk rubble with loam/clay at the top, 30–40 cm thick, above 90 cm of chalk rubble with loam, (both contexts 4030). The lowest fill of orange-brown fine loam surrounded the skeleton (context 4031). Burial 3 was female, probably old, lying on her back, with legs straight and with the left arm bent across the torso. Stature was recorded as 154.6 cm from tibiae and femora. The skeleton was in

fair condition with all the bones represented, but only occupied two-thirds of the grave. The coffin was represented by fifteen coffin nails (170–185).

Grave goods

None present.

Residual pottery

One body sherd of Roman greyware was identified from context 4030, as well as six Iron Age sherds.

Grave 4 (Fig. 6)

NW–SE $2.15 \times 0.75 \times 0.70$ m

The sides of this grave were straight, cut almost vertical and the overall alignment was more to the northwest than Graves 1–2 and 3. Grave 4 either cut or was cut by Grave 5 (context 3026) but the relationship was not noted at the time of excavation. Three layers of fill were present in Grave 4. Two (4040) comprised 30 cm of clay/clayey loam and chalk rubble. Beneath them was 10 cm of orange to dark-brown fine clayey loam containing the burial (4041). Burial 4 was an almost complete skeleton of a middle-aged/old male preserved in fair condition. Stature was recorded as 175.5 cm from the left humerus. The body was lying on its side facing east. The right leg was crossed over the left and both arms were to the left of the body. The skull was displaced and located behind the knees. Five coffin nails were recovered. A group of loose bones consisting of juvenile vertebral spine fragments, fragments of an infant skull and two ribs were located in the southeast corner of Grave 4. These bones were clearly from earlier disturbed burials.

Grave goods

An iron knife was found near the left elbow (160, Fig. 12c) and a coin dated to AD 388–392 (A. Hobley pers. comm.) in the left hand (159). Another coin of 4th century date was found, possibly below the skull (161). Hobnails were present near the feet (195).

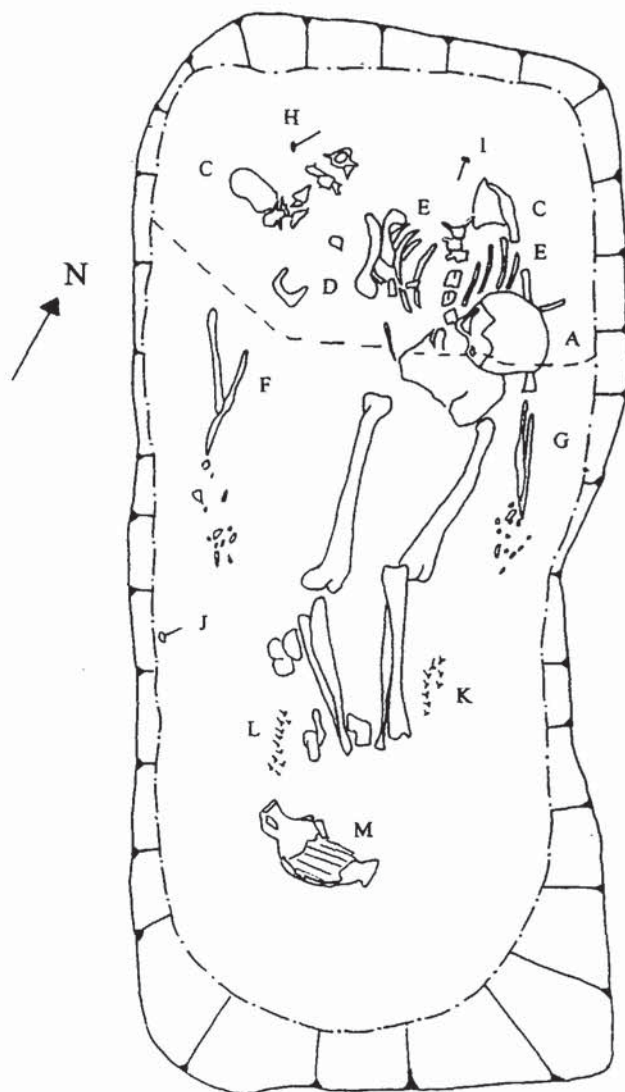
Residual pottery

Three body sherds of Roman greyware were recovered from context 4040.

Grave 5 (Fig. 7)

NW–SE $2.05 \times 0.70 \times 1.00$ m

The depth of Grave 5 was estimated from the photographic records. It was rectangular with vertical sides and a fill of chalk rubble with clayey loam (3027). Burial 5 was the skeleton of a young female, in a poor and fragmentary condition. Stature was recorded as 152.3 cm from the left tibia. The burial was on its side

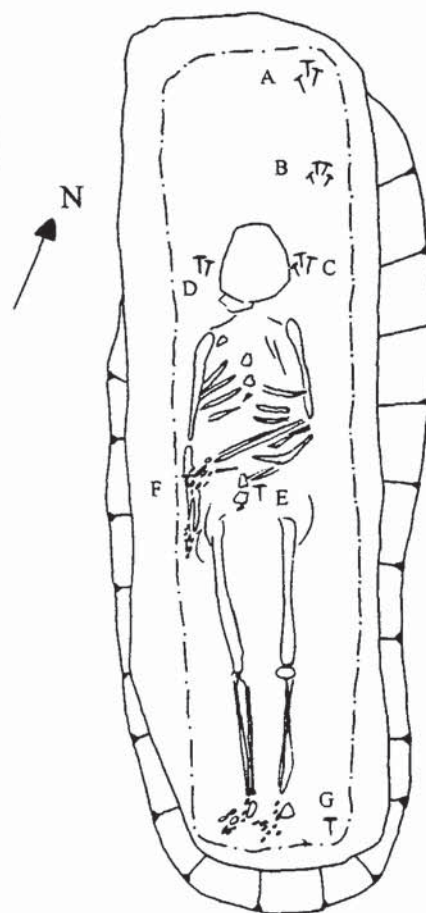


GRAVE 2

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| A Skull | F Right arm |
| B Pelvis | G Left arm |
| C Scapula | H-J Coffin nails |
| D Lower jaw | K-L Hobnails |
| E Ribs | M Pottery flagon |

0 ————— 1
metre

Fig. 4 Plan of Grave 2

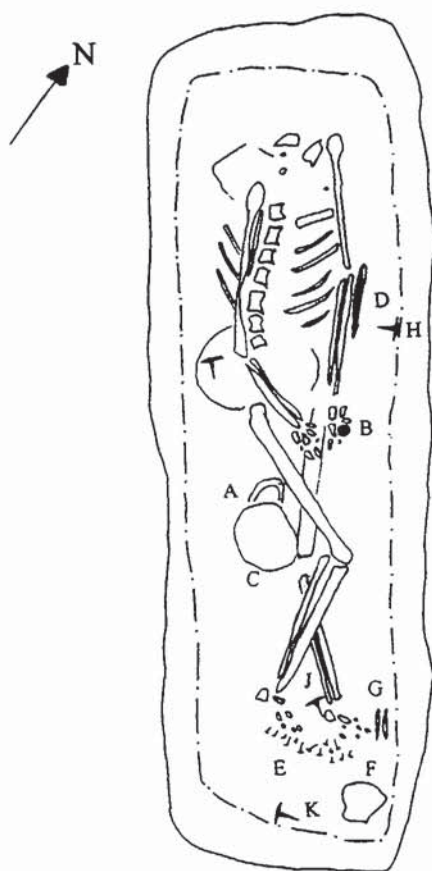


GRAVE 3

- A-G Coffin nails

0 ————— 1
metre

Fig. 5 Plan of Grave 3

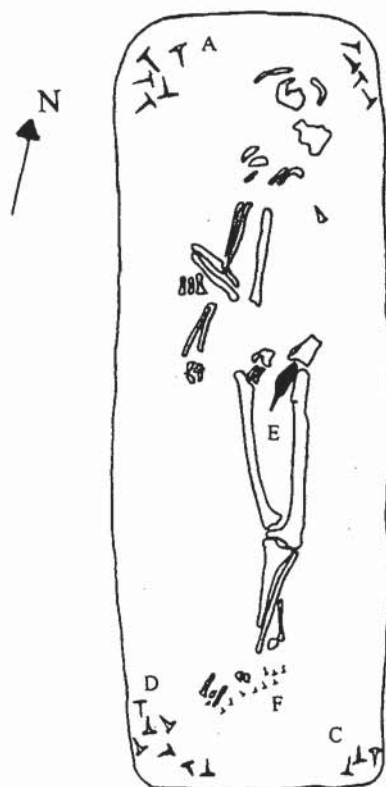


GRAVE 4

- A Skull & Lower jaw (displaced)
 B Coin (found in left hand)
 C Coin (found below skull)
 D Iron knife
 E Hobnails
 F-G Skull & ribs (from an earlier burial)
 H-K Coffin nails

0 ————— 1
 metre

Fig. 6 Plan of Grave 4



GRAVE 5

- A-D Coffin nails
 T definite
 Y possible
 E Iron knife
 F Hobnails

0 ————— 1
 metre

Fig. 7 Plan of Grave 5

facing west with both arms west of the body, the straight right arm crossed by the lower left. The left leg was crossed over the right. Thirteen coffin nails (131–3, 135, 137, 139–43, 169, 171–2) were found in the corners of the grave.

Grave goods (Fig. 12a)

An iron knife (166) was discovered beside the pelvis, and hobnails at the feet (173).

Grave 6 (Fig. 8)

NW–SE $2.10 \times 0.85 \times 1.00$ m

The depth was estimated from the photographic records. The fill of the grave was chalk with brown clayey loam, recorded as context 3025. A number of disarticulated bones, including a skull, a long bone and rib (context 3028) are evident from the photographic record, lying at the feet of the main burial. Skeleton 3028 was a middle-aged male in good condition but fragmented in places. Stature was recorded as 158.3 cm from the left femur. Burial 6 was the almost complete skeleton of an old male, and in fair condition, although the skull was broken. Stature was recorded as 168.7 cm from the right femur and tibia. The body was lying on its back with the head displaced and facing east. The left arm was straight and the right arm crossed over the torso. Fourteen coffin nails (144–6, 148–9, 151–3, 157–62) were found in the corners of the grave.

Grave goods

Hobnails (99) and (156) were displaced half-way along the western side of the grave.

Other finds not classed as grave goods

Burnt flint, flint flakes and quartzite.

Grave 7 (Fig. 9)

NW–SE $1.85 \times 0.70 \times 0.50$ m

No description of the fill (3010) was recorded but the grave had suffered considerable root disturbance. Burial 7 was probably that of an adult female. The skeleton was very fragmentary and in poor condition, and most of the torso was missing. The skeleton was probably on its side facing west with the legs bent towards the west. Parts of an earlier cremation were also present, consisting of three fragments of calcined skull from a juvenile, some charcoal and three sherds of Roman colour coated pottery. Twelve coffin nails (110–120, 124) were discovered in the corners of the grave.

Grave goods

Three copper alloy Roman coins (129) identified as Valentinian AD 364–378 (A. Hobley pers. comm.), were discovered near the pelvis.

Other finds not classed as grave goods

Three sherds of Roman colour-coated pottery; and a number of flint flakes.

Grave 8

NW–SE

Grave 8 (3000) was revealed by mechanical excavation and only received limited recording because of the machine stripping. No plan or record of its dimensions exists, though it was noted that graves 8 and 9 were the shallowest in the group. Nor is there any description of the fill (3001). As the burial was not found *in situ* the position of the body cannot be determined. The skeleton, probably that of a young adult female, was preserved in a fragmentary but fair condition. No skull was found and stature was not recorded. A few fragments of foetal bone were discovered with the skeleton.

Grave goods

An iron knife, a bone comb and one or more bone bracelets accompanied this burial (Figs 12b & 13) but their position in the grave could not be recorded at the time.

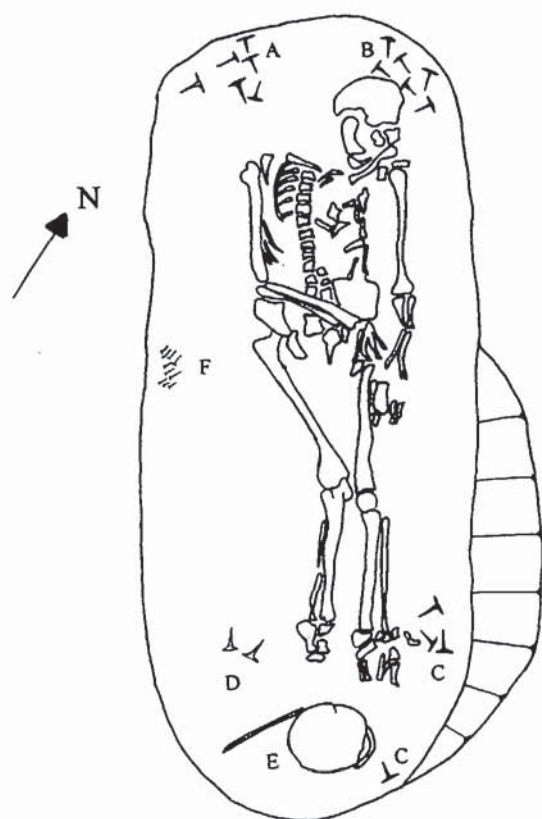
Grave 9 (Fig. 10)

NW–SE $2.1 \times 0.70\text{--}0.80 \times 0.20$ m

The fill (3008) was a light brown silt with chalk fragments at 1 cm thick. The cut of the grave was sub-rectangular but this may be due to the shallow survival. The almost complete skeleton was of a young to middle-aged male, and was in fair to good condition. It lay on its back with the lower arms crossed over the body. The skull was broken. The head was facing east and the legs were bent towards the east. Stature was recorded as 163.5 cm from the left femur. Eleven coffin nails (100–1, 103–7) were found in the corners of the grave.

Grave goods

Five copper alloy coins (108) were found near the head. Green staining was noted in the neck area of the skeleton. The coins are described as 'small and probably late copies' (I. R. Scott pers. comm.). One worked bone object (102) was also found.

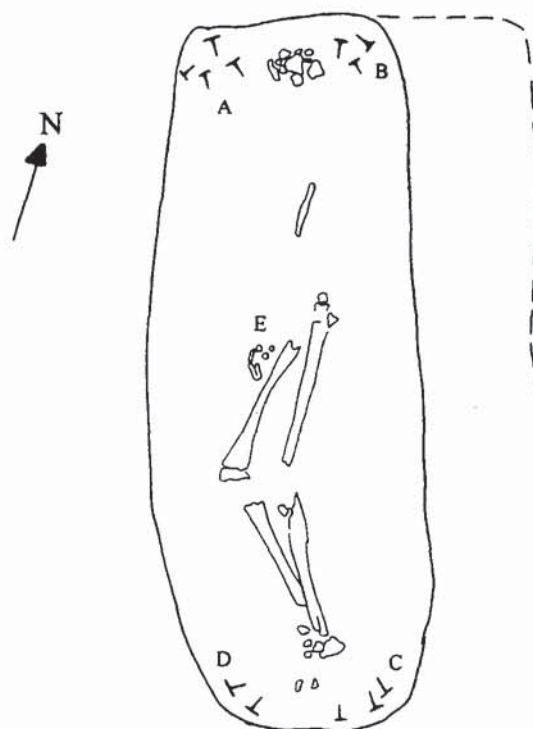


GRAVE 6

A-D Coffin nails
 T definite
 V possible
 E Bones from earlier disturbed burial
 F Hobnails

0 ————— 1
 metre

Fig. 8 Plan of Grave 6



GRAVE 7

A-D Coffin nails
 E 3 coins (found near pelvis)

0 ————— 1
 metre

Fig. 9 Plan of Grave 7

DISCUSSION

The excavation of the nine graves found at Winchester Street confirms the presence of a Romano-British cemetery and whilst the scale of the find is too limited to allow many conclusions to be drawn regarding funerary customs, the evidence will be discussed alongside that for late Roman burial practice at the Lankhills Cemetery, Winchester. Evidence from the 4th-century cemetery at Burntwood Farm, 4 km north-east of Winchester, and sites in the Andover area, will also be used for comparison.

The Skeletal Remains

In addition to the nine more or less complete skeletons located in the nine identified graves, there were traces of a number of earlier disturbed burials. The bones from a disturbed inhumation found near the feet of the burial in Grave 6 have been examined during the compiling of this report bringing the total of skeletons recovered from the cemetery to ten. Grave 4 contained fragments of at least two other individuals, their remains grouped in the south-east corner of the grave pit, Grave 7 contained remains from a cremation, and a number of foetal bones were found with the adult burial in Grave 8.

The earlier disturbed burials suggest a longer date span for the cemetery and evidence for cremation as a burial rite. It is likely therefore that the graves form part of a larger cemetery and any conclusions which may be drawn from the comparatively small number of skeletons examined is limited, and probably unrepresentative of the whole (Anderson 1991).

Of the nine *in situ* burials, five were almost complete skeletons in fair or fair to good condition (Graves 2, 3, 4, 6, and 9), one was a fragmentary skeleton in fair condition (Grave 8) and three were fragmentary skeletons in poor condition (Graves 1, 5 and 7). Age categories were assigned on the basis of dental analysis, the amount of bone degeneration and changes in pubic symphysis. Nine of the ten skeletons were adults; five males, two females and two possible females. The remaining skeleton was of a sub-adult. One male and one female were identified as

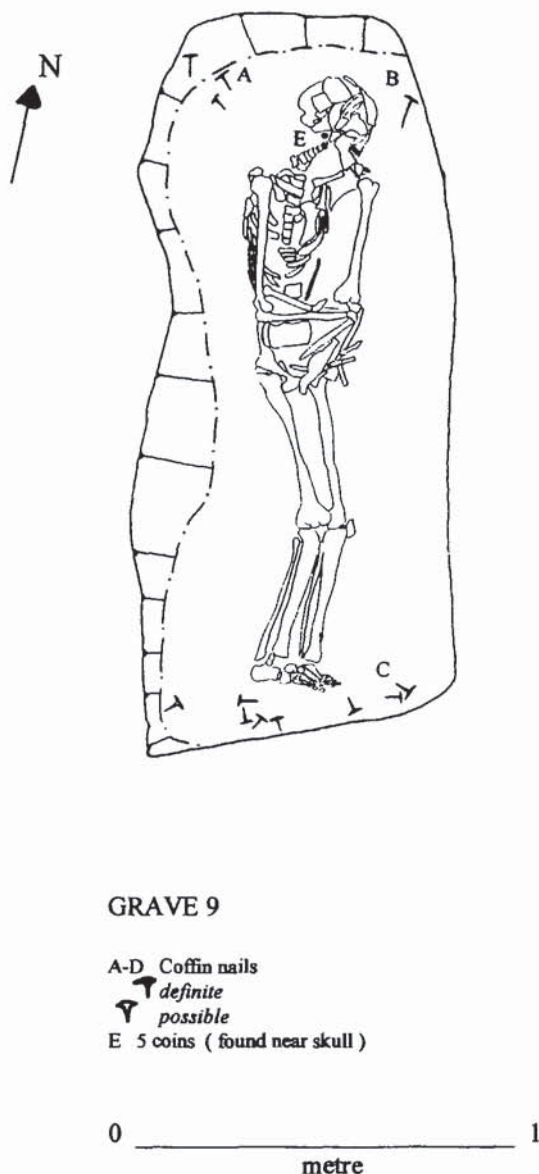


Fig. 10 Plan of Grave 9

'young', one male was 'young/middle-aged', two males were 'middle-aged/old' and one male and one female were considered 'old'. Two females could only be identified as 'adult'. The calculated stature for all the five males ranged from 1.58m

to 1.78m. Two of the females had their stature calculated at just over 1.5m. These measurements are considered normal for the Roman period. The sex ratio of the group of individuals excavated was 1:1. The incidence of dental disease and degenerative disease was high, but this is likely to be due to the large proportion of older adults among the individuals examined. Two of the skeletons were found to have unusual congenital abnormalities, the presence of lumbar ribs, which suggests that they may have been related. Burial 9 had a pair of these additional bones, Burial 2 had at least one.

Grave Alignment and Size

The graves at Winchester Street were aligned roughly NW-SE, with the heads to the north-west. No discernible topographical features determined this alignment, but it may be that such features are now no longer detectable. Most of the graves at Lankhills were aligned on topographical features; the western part of the site would have been aligned with the Roman road from Winchester to Cirencester. At Burntwood Farm, seven graves were laid out East to West in a linear cemetery, head to toe, with all the heads at the west end of the graves. The graves were laid out alongside a boundary ditch. An eighth grave was located separately.

It was possible to identify which way the bodies were facing with six out of the nine skeletons. Three males faced east and two females faced west, with one body of indeterminate sex facing east. There may therefore have been deliberate positioning of the bodies according to gender.

The dimensions of the graves at Winchester Street range from 1.85m × 0.7m (Grave 7) to 3.6m × 1.9m (pit 4023). At Burntwood Farm, Fasham (1979, 83) suggests that the size of the graves had little to do with the practical requirements of burial. The dimensions of the graves are described as large, ranging from 1.98m × 0.8m to the largest at 3.42m × 1.4m, but the largest grave was twice the length of the individual buried in it. Similarly, at Winchester Street, the female buried in Grave 3 only occupied two-thirds of the grave.

At Winchester Street the shallowest grave, mea-

sured from the surface of the machine scraped and damaged chalk, was 0.2m and the deepest 1.55m. At Burntwood Farm depths ranged from 0.45m to 0.83m, while at Lankhills the evidence suggests that the number of shallow graves increased after c. AD 390 and that very deep burials were not taking place at this time (Clarke 1979, 133)

Treatment of the Body

Two of the burials had their heads displaced. The skull from the main burial in Grave 6 was positioned at a short distance from the upper vertebrae, facing east. The skeleton was male and the only accompanying grave goods were a group of hobnails, found on the west side of the body near the pelvis. The burial in Grave 4 was decapitated, and the head positioned behind the knees. This skeleton was male, and was accompanied by two coins, one in the left hand and one below the displaced skull, and an iron knife. The coin in the left hand of the skeleton has a date of c. AD 388–392 giving the burial a late 4th century date. Seven decapitated skeletons with their heads placed by the legs or feet were discovered at Lankhills. Six of the seven decapitations can be dated to after c. 350. There is some evidence to suggest that decapitated bodies were buried in the same grave pit as other bodies (Philpott 1991, 82). A group of disarticulated bones including juvenile vertebral spine fragments and an infant skull and two ribs were found in the south-east corner of Grave 4, Winchester Street. At Lankhills Grave 451 contained a decapitated skeleton and a compact pile of disarticulated bones (Clarke 1979, 91). Clarke suggests that decapitation may have been a predominantly rural practice which spread from the country to the town in the late 4th century. The evidence also seems to suggest that decapitated skeletons are mostly found in central and southern-central England, with the exception of East Sussex and Kent, (three early examples are recorded in Kent) (Clarke 1979, 374; Philpott 1991, 78).

Mortuary Chamber

Graves 1 and 2 were situated in a large pit (context 4023) measuring 1.9m in length and 3.6m in

width, with a maximum depth of 1.55m. The pit contained a timber structure or lining as evidenced by postholes on each of the long sides and interpreted as a mortuary chamber (Figs 3 & 11). Wood stains and nails were also recorded. Five postholes were identified on the north-east side of the pit, but only two remained to the north-west as a result of the insertion of the secondary burial and the collapse of the pit during excavation. The posthole depths were not recorded, but diameters ranged from 20 cm–35 cm, with one possible diameter of 45 cm. A number of stakeholes also survived as voids within the fill, at a depth of 30cm in the south-east corner of the pit. The surviving depths of the stakeholes are recorded as 20cm with diameters of 14–20 cm.

The size of this chamber was exceptional and the implication is that the primary interment represented a burial of considerable status. The elaborate timber shuttering of the pit walls, and deeper cut or manufactured ledge for the placement of Burial 2 equates well with the 'step graves' recorded by Clarke at Lankhills (Clarke 1979, 135). A total of 17 'step-graves' were dug at Lankhills, 14 of the graves were dug for adults and 3 for children. The graves were dated to *c.* AD 310–370/90 and Clarke suggests that these graves were more typical of this period than the later 4th century (1979, 134). A 'ledged' grave at Kelvedon was dated to after *c.* AD 350 whereas five of the seven graves with ledges at Roden Downs can be dated to *c.* AD 324–364 (Philpott 1991, 69).

Coffins

Coffin nails were found in eight of the nine graves at Winchester Street, usually in the corners of the grave. The number of nails associated with each coffin ranged from 5 to 15 in six of the graves, but in the case of Burials 1 and 2 a much larger find of 151 nails was associated with the void left by the decay of the coffin, although many may have been employed on the structure which lined the pit.

At Lankhills most burials were in wooden coffins as evidenced by iron nails, fittings and sometimes wood fragments. Of the 408 burials, nails were recovered from 338, and wood fragments, but no nails, from two more (Clarke 1979,

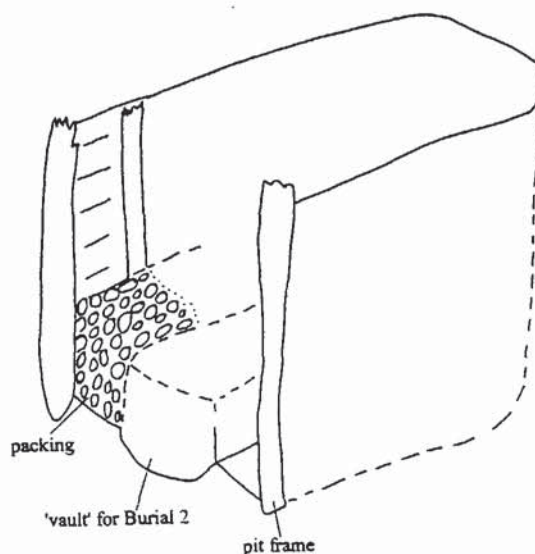


Fig. 11 Suggested reconstruction of Grave 2 timber mortuary chamber (not to scale)

332). At Burntwood Farm all eight inhumations were in coffins. The number of nails ranged from 20 to 160 and impressions of wood, mostly oak, were found on a small number of nails from each coffin.

The Grave Goods

Hobnails

Small groups of hobnails representing boots, shoes or sandals, were discovered with five of the nine burials at Winchester Street and in one grave there was a single stray find. Three of the burials were male graves, one was female and one of uncertain sex. In three cases, Graves 1, 4 and 5, the hobnails were at the feet and a fragment of shoe heel was discovered with the nails in Grave 4. In Graves 2 and 6 the hobnails were displaced. Grave 2 had two sets positioned either side of the lower leg bones and in Grave 6 one set was located on the west side of the body, level with the pelvis. At Lankhills about one-third of the graves contained hobnails and they were recovered from both male and female burials.

The numbers used on any one pair of shoes or

boots varied considerably. In general the position of the hobnails at Lankhills changed from being well clear of the feet in the early life of the cemetery to being found among the toe bones during the final years of the cemetery. There is evidence that in graves with hobnails and coins, as in Grave 4 at Winchester Street, or with hobnails and no other furniture, as in Grave 1 at Winchester Street, the hobnails were more commonly found at the feet indicating that the footwear was worn at the time of burial (Philpott 1991, 168). In graves with hobnails and pottery vessels the hobnails were found away from the feet, burials with vessels being more common in the early fourth century. At the end of the 4th century hobnails became less frequent in female graves. This may be because women, and children, were buried without shoes or that the shoes no longer incorporated iron nails (Clarke 1979, 180). Philpott suggests that the practice of burial with footwear was concentrated in south-central England and more common on rural sites (Philpott 1991, 167).

At Burntwood Farm large numbers of hobnails were found with two of the eight burials, both female. The burial in Grave 54 had been buried with her footwear on, and more than 87 iron studs and nails were recovered. In Grave 49 102 shoe nails were found at the feet of the skeleton (Fasham 1980, 58).

Coins

Ten coins were recovered from the Winchester Street excavations. They came from three of the graves, and in all three cases two or more coins accompanied the burials. Their funerary function would be to pay Charon, the ferryman, so that the deceased could journey on the Styx, and other rivers of the underworld. Five coins were found near the head of Burial 9 and identified as 'small and probably late copies' (I. R. Scott pers. comm.). Three, of Valentinian AD 364–378, were discovered near the pelvis of Burial 7, whilst Burial 4 had one coin dated to AD 388–392 in the left hand and one of 4th century date located, in all probability, below the skull. At Lankhills, of the forty-one graves with coins, twenty-six had a single coin, thirteen had between two to five coins, and two graves had six coins. After being rare in the 3rd century, graves with coins again

became common in the late 4th century. In particular graves with more than one coin may be typical of this period. At Lankhills all graves with more than three coins were dated to after AD 360 (Clarke 1979, 359). Also at Lankhills all coins buried after AD 330 were found in the mouth, around the skull or near the hands. At Winchester Street only Burial 7 had coins positioned in the region of the pelvis, but as this skeleton was in a poor and fragmentary condition with most of the torso missing, the original location of the coins is open to question.

Knives (Fig. 12)

Three knives were found at Winchester Street. They were recovered from separate graves, those containing burials 4, 5, and 8. The knife from Burial 4 was in a male grave but Burial 5 was female and Burial 8 was possibly female. The knife with Burial 4 was found near the left elbow whilst Burial 5 had the knife by the pelvis. The position of the knife with Burial 8 is not recorded.

The occurrence of knives with burials at Lankhills is rare and the evidence suggests that this became more common after AD 350. There were seven complete knives in total, all in graves dated to between AD 350 and 410. Six of the seven knives were accompanied by other grave goods and all were recovered from male graves (Clarke 1979, 250). Philpott suggests that inhumation burials with knives occur in a restricted area of south-central England, notably Dorset, Wiltshire and Hampshire and in general at rural sites and small towns (Philpott 1991, 176).

Bone comb (Fig. 13)

The bone comb found at Winchester Street came from Grave 8, possibly a female grave, and may be paralleled with Type C, the composite double-sided bone comb from Lankhills where thirteen of this type were found in graves dated to after AD 365. In total twenty-one combs were found at Lankhills, in both male and female graves, nearly all dated to after AD 350. Philpott (1991, 180) suggests that in a minority of examples, combs were accompanied by other grave furniture, usually personal ornaments. At Lankhills seven of the thirteen bone combs were accompanied by other grave furniture including

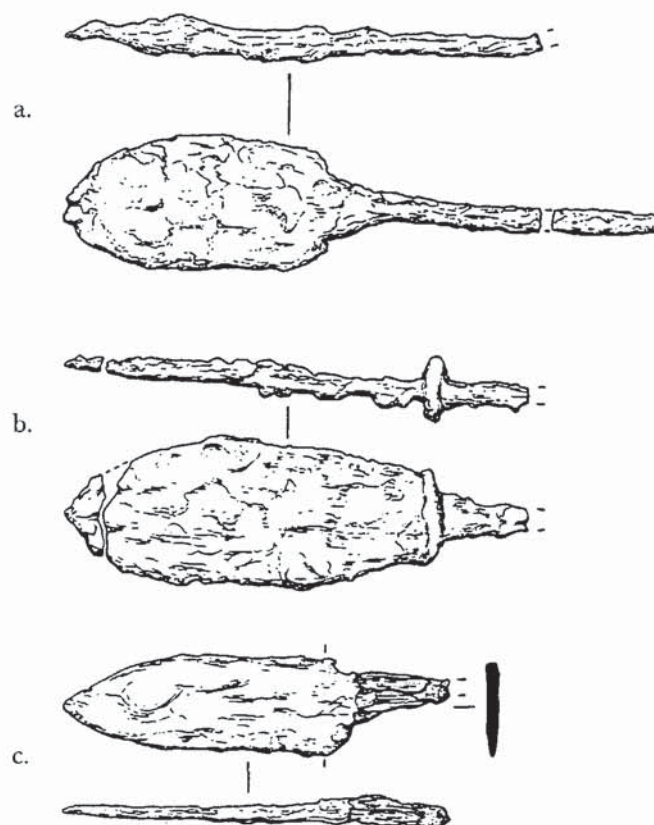


Fig. 12 Iron knives from a Grave 5, b Grave 8 c Grave 4. Scale 1:2

pottery vessels, glass vessels, bracelets, beads and coins (Clarke 1979, 24–91).

Bracelets (Fig. 13)

Two bone bracelets were found in Grave 8, Winchester Street. These have been illustrated but the fastenings – the defining feature for these artefacts – were not in a good enough condition to make classification possible. Forty-two bone bracelets were recovered from Lankhills (Clarke 1979, 313), but neither combs nor bracelets were found at Burntwood Farm.

Dating Evidence

Precise dating for the start and finish of the Winchester Street cemetery is not possible because of

the incomplete nature of the evidence. The presence of a fragmentary redeposited cremation and disturbed inhumations has already been noted, but the layout of the nine complete graves suggests a fairly close time-span, even allowing for the recutting of Grave 2/1. The pottery from the grave fills has a broad bracket of AD 270–400, refined to 320–350 by the New Forest Wares. When the identifiable coins are taken into consideration, the three accompanying Burial 7 are dated AD 364–378, whilst the coin with Burial 4 dates to AD 388–392, the most likely period for these graves to have been dug is around the last quarter of the 4th century. It is therefore of particular interest that the pottery vessel from Grave 2 is apparently of much earlier date. This wheelmade, developed ring-necked flagon has

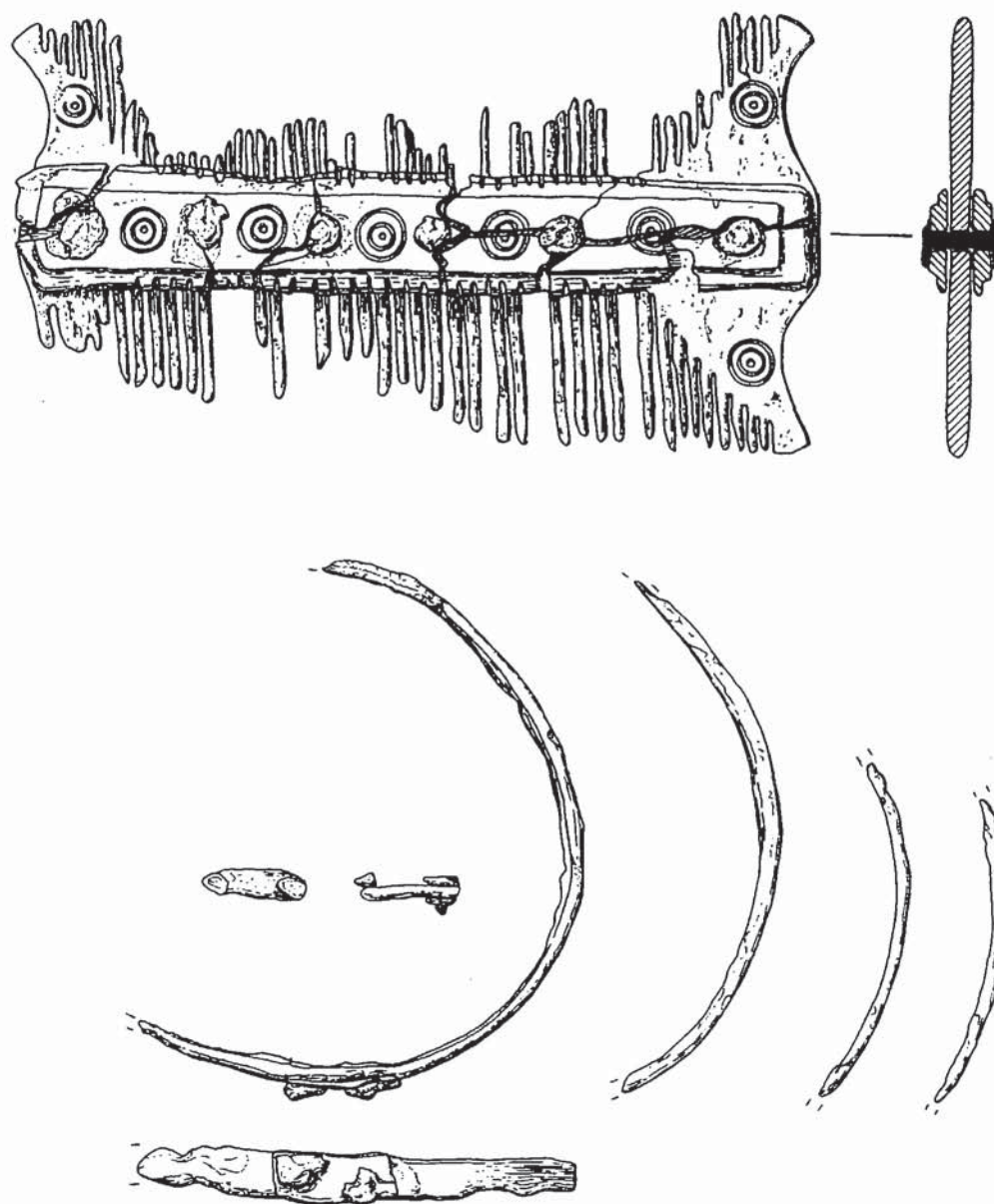


Fig. 13 Bone comb and bracelets from Grave 8. Scale 1:1

been examined by a number of specialists, and the general opinion is that it is of Flavian or early second century date, perhaps no later than AD 140. However, Grave 2 has close parallels with the Lankhills 'step-graves' recorded by Clarke (1979, 135, Fig. 11) and these are dated with some certainty to the period AD 310–370. It seems likely, if somewhat remarkable, that this vessel is a late survival, included in Grave 2 perhaps 170 years after its manufacture. The evidence for Grave 2 would suggest that this is one of the earlier graves in the cemetery, revealed so far, and that Grave 4 is of a later date. The inclusion of long-lived pots or 'heirlooms' is not an uncommon Roman practice. A late 3rd century inhumation from Hurstbourne Priors 8 km from Andover, for example, contained a samian vessel dating to AD 160 (Allen 1992).

The Wider Picture

The site of the Romano-British settlement to which the Winchester Street cemetery belonged has not been identified. The Roman road from Winchester to Cirencester, passes within 500m of the cemetery before reaching the crossroads with the Portway 2km to the north. There are indications of substantial early Roman activity in the general locality (Fig. 14) but nothing that lies close to Winchester Street.

The best clue to a settlement in the immediate locality is the reporting of a possible hypocaust during the construction of the Savoy cinema in 1937/8 just 20m to the north-east of the cemetery. Less secure sightings of tesserae are reported from the Wellington Inn and South Street locations (Fig. 1b).

The grave furniture, in particular the three knives, bone comb and bracelets, and the existence of a 'step-grave' (Grave 2) suggest that the rural community at Winchester Street was influenced by some of the burial customs practiced at Lankhills, Winchester. This may explain why two-thirds of the graves were furnished during a period when unfurnished inhumation was the normal burial rite for most Romano-Britons, with the notable exception of the late 4th century burials at Lankhills. (Philpott 1991, 226) An alternative view is that the late Roman cemetery

at Winchester Street contained graves of individuals of some status.

Excavations have revealed parts of other cemeteries to the north and west of Andover (Fig. 14). A small cemetery of late Roman date, with two complete burials and a number of disturbed bones, was discovered at Camelot Close, SU 364 470, about 100m south of the Portway Roman Road and 800m to the west of the East Anton crossroads (Allen 1991, 43). A 4th/5th century Roman cremation cemetery was found at Knights Enham Hill (unpublished), SU 367 477, 500m from the crossroads and 2km north of Andover. Seven vessels of New Forest Ware contained and were surrounded by cremated bone. Fourteen bronze coins dating from AD 268–388, a bronze buckle, fragments of decorated and plain pottery accompanied the cremations.

A single cremation burial was unearthed during the construction of the Walworth Industrial Estate (unpublished), at SU 379 463. The cremation, along with metal fragments, was contained in a decorated beaker of Oxford Ware dated to the 3rd/4th century. In addition an unpublished inhumation cemetery of possible 3rd century date was located to the west of Andover at Portway Ditches, on Portway West Industrial Estate, SU 339 466. This small cemetery comprised 3 adults and 12 infants discovered during the excavation of an earlier ditch. The inhumations were buried beneath separate cairns of flint nodules.

Taken on their own none of these discoveries is of great import. Considered as a whole they paint a busy picture of late Roman activity around the general area of the Roman crossroads, a bustling scene in which the Winchester Street cemetery, and the community it represents, played a significant part.

THE POTTERY (based on the archive report by Charlotte Matthews)

A reasonable quantity of Roman pottery (380 sherds weighing 3445 grams) was recovered from the graves excavated in 1987, most of it (301 sherds) from Pit 4023 (Fig. 15). It is this material which is commented on here, in order to give an indication, if possible, of the nature and duration

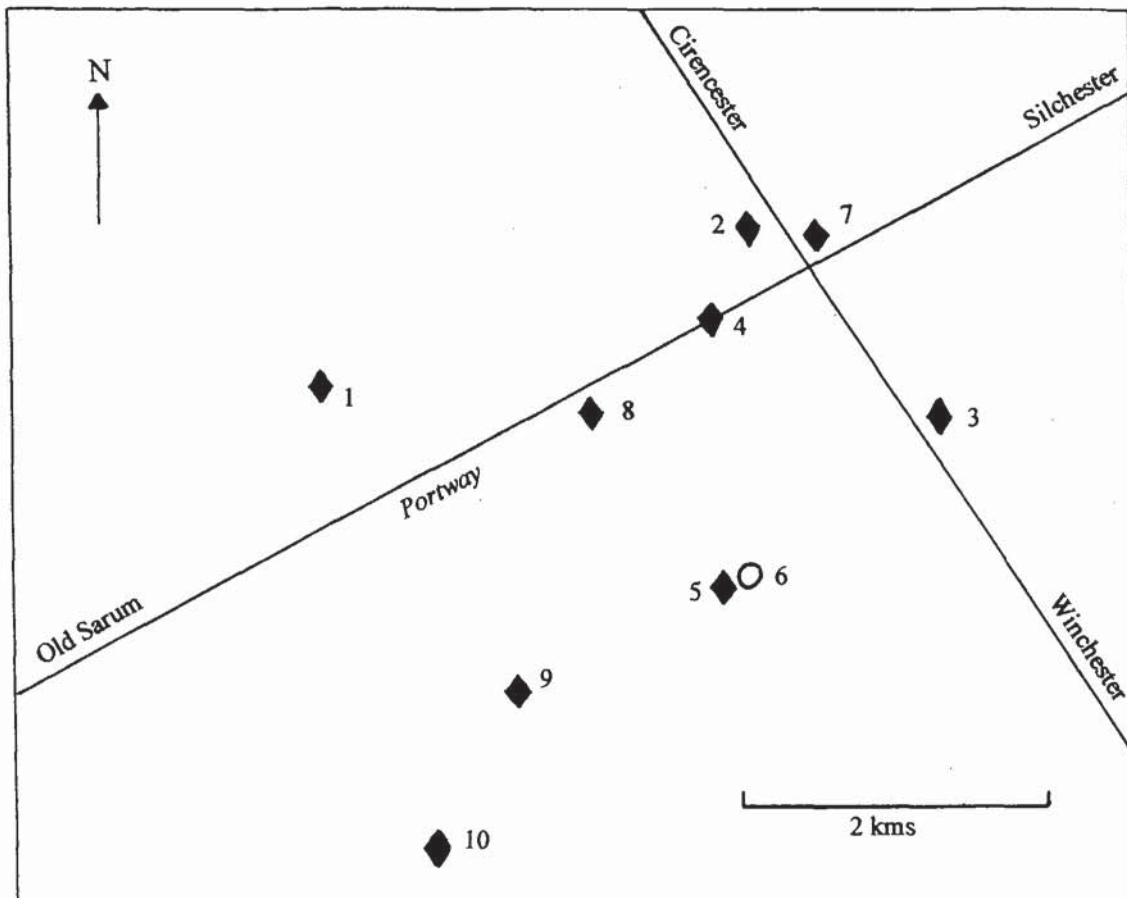


Fig. 14 Map showing location of Roman burial sites close to the Roman Roads: Winchester to Cirencester and Silchester to Old Sarum (the Portway). Portway Ditches 2. Knights Enham Hill 3. Walworth Industrial Estate 4. Camelot Close 5. Winchester Street 6. Savoy Cinema Other Roman sites featured on map: 7. East Anton 8. Old Down Farm (Iron Age/Roman) 9. Balksbury (Iron Age/Roman) 10. Bury Hill (Iron Age/Roman)

of the occupation site which lies somewhere in the vicinity.

With the exception of the ring-necked flagon from the primary burial (see Burial 2 above) the pottery is discussed as one group, since it all appeared to be contemporary. There were a number of cross-layer fits between the secondary burial (Burial 1) backfill, and the mixed upper fills. Several sherds of the same pot occurred throughout these layers.

The following fabrics could be identified; New Forest parchment ware, Fulford (1975a), type 86,

c. AD 320–370; New Forest greyware jar, Fulford (*ibid*) type 35, *c.* 270–350, New Forest colour coat with white painted decoration, Fulford (*ibid*), pre 350, and New Forest greyware lid-seated jar, Fulford (1975a), *c.* 270–350. There were also examples of Oxfordshire kilns colour coated ware, greywares – probably from Alice Holt, Black Burnished Wares, and some grog-tempered wares. A general date of AD 270–400 would apply to this assemblage, more closely defined to AD 320–350 by the New Forest products.

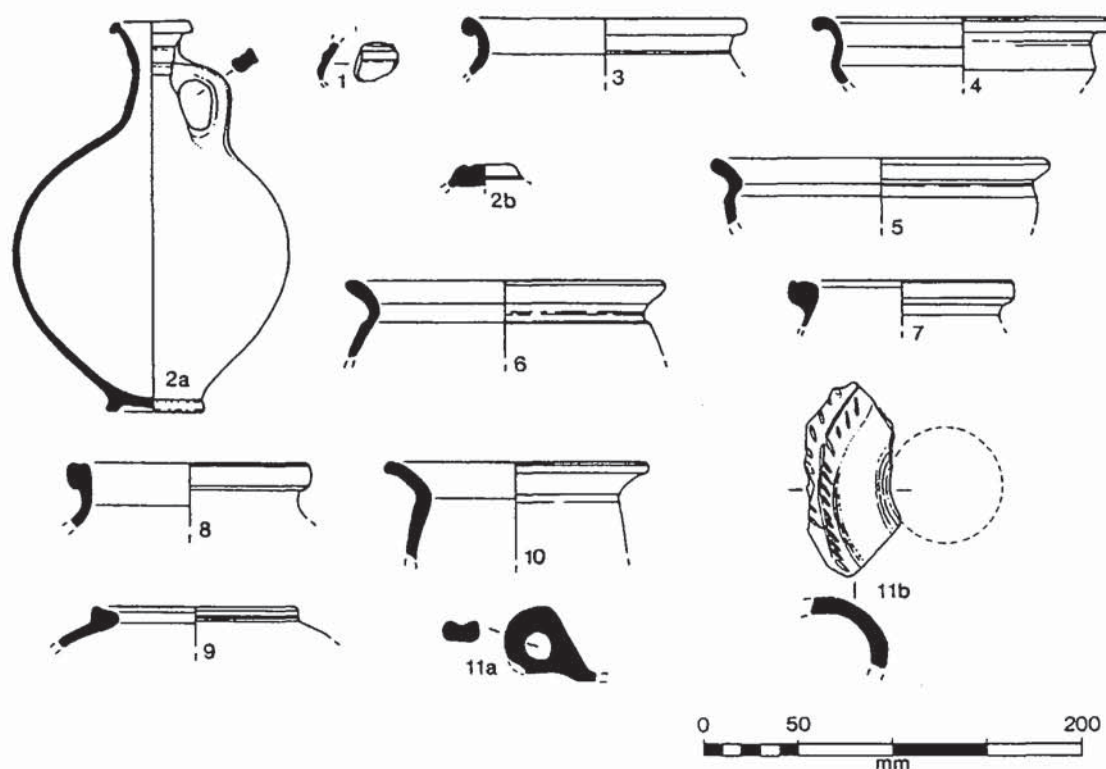


Fig. 15 Iron Age and Roman pottery Iron Age pottery: 1. Meon Hill type cordoned bowl. Fine sandy fabric – red iron oxides on external and internal surfaces with reduced black core. Red finish on internal and external surfaces. Early Iron Age c. 6th–4th centuries BC. (context 4030 from fill of Grave 3) Roman pottery: 2a. Grave vessel. Wheelmade developed ring-necked flagon. Medium grained sandy fabric – red-orange oxides with reduced grey core. White slip on external surface and internal neck surface, possibly from Wiltshire. c. AD 60–140 (context 4022 with burial in Grave 2).

A representative selection of forms is illustrated (Fig. 15) along with a probable gaming counter fashioned from the base of a New Forest colour coated beaker (Fig. 15, 2b). An unusual find is a curved and out-flaring sherd with slashed line decoration and burnishing (Fig. 15, 11a). It has been looked at by a number of experts and suggested parallels include a large tazza type vessel, a ring-shaped costrel, or a ring lamp. Suggested provenances include Switzerland.

A rough comparison of fabric percentage by weight was made with late Roman pottery from Portchester (Fulford 1975b), Winchester (King, forthcoming) and Neatham (Millett, 1986).

	<i>Andover</i>	<i>Portchester</i>	<i>Winchester</i>	<i>Neatham</i>
New Forest	5%	12%	19%	up to 7%
Oxfordshire	1%	5%	2%	up to 6%
Grog	19%	27%	17%	up to 6%
BB1	5%	22%	4%	up to 1%
Greywares	67%	27%	52%	86%+

N.B. New Forest is used here to include colour coats and parchment ware but does not include greywares.

The high percentage of greywares at Neatham reflects the site's proximity to the Alice Holt kilns. The high percentage of Black Burnished I (BB1) at Portchester also stands out, indicating the case

with which BB1 could be imported to Portchester by sea. Not surprisingly, the relative percentages of late Roman pottery from this pit in Andover most resemble the profile for Winchester.

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