

**Channel Tunnel Rail Link
Union Railways (South) Limited**

Project Area 430

**BOYS HALL BALANCING POND, SEVINGTON, KENT
ARC BHB 98**

**STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE EXCAVATION
ASSESSMENT REPORT
FINAL**

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Contract S/400/SP/0008 P481

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13th December 2000

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SUMMARY

As part of an extensive programme of archaeological investigation carried out in advance of the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), the Oxford Archaeological Unit were commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited to undertake a strip, map and sample excavation at Boys Hall Balancing Pond, Sevington, in Kent. The site lay immediately adjacent to Boys Hall Moat, the site of the moated manor of Sevington, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Kent SAM 146). A single sherd of late Bronze Age pottery is the only evidence to suggest that the earliest features on the site may be a group of ditches which perhaps formed a field system. The majority of the features excavated date from the late Iron Age and Roman period. A series of closely spaced parallel ditches, again perhaps part of a field system, as well as the earliest of a small cluster of cremations in pits, can be dated to the earlier part of this period (late Iron Age - *c* AD 70). One of the ditches in this group, and three further cremations can be dated to the later part (*c* AD 70-200). A further cremation in the same cluster contained no pottery but probably dates from the same general phase. Two large ditches and a small cobbled area are post-medieval in date, and are probably related to the formal gardens which were laid out around Boys Hall Moat in that period.

The site is of interest in terms of the organisation of the landscape and burial practices. The burial group is of interest as small cemeteries associated with small-scale rural settlements of this period are not well known in the south-east of England (Drewett, Rudling and Gardiner 1988, 233). Unfortunately only small parts of the field systems were exposed within the area of the excavation and their wider layout is unknown. A clearer picture of their wider layout may be obtained if they can be related to features found in the numerous other investigations which have taken place around the site. It is also unfortunate that the location of any associated settlement is unknown. The site nonetheless provides some evidence for the division and organisation of the landscape. The possible middle Bronze Age ditch is of particular interest because, if it is of this date, it is amongst the earliest examples of field systems known. Its date, however, based upon only a single sherd, cannot be considered reliable.

The cremations are badly truncated and are therefore have little potential for investigating the detail of burial practices. Nevertheless the CTRL project has uncovered a number of isolated burials and cemeteries of similar date, direct comparison of which may provide some evidence for variation in burial practices in the region. They also provide evidence for the ritual organisation of the landscape, although it is again unfortunate in this respect that the wider form of the field system with which they are associated and the location of any settlement is unclear.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) to undertake a strip, map and sample excavation at Boys Hall Balancing Pond, Sevington, Ashford, Kent (Figure 1; ARC BHB 99). The excavation covered contiguous areas *c* 80 m x 65 m and *c* 40 m x 5 m (*c* 5400 m², 0.54 ha), centred at URL grid 83050 20650 (OS NGR TR 0305 4065). The excavation took place between 26th April 1999 and 14th May 1999. The results of the Sevington Railhead geophysical survey (ARC SRH 95), the North of Sevington Railhead evaluation (ARC SRH 97) and the Boys Hall Road to Sevington Railhead evaluation (ARC BHR 97) have also been considered in this assessment (Table 1). This work formed part of an extensive programme of archaeological investigation carried out on behalf of URS in advance of the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by Rail Link Engineering (RLE), and agreed in consultation with English Heritage and Kent County Council (KCC), on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

Table 1: List of fieldwork events

Fieldwork event name	Fieldwork event code	Contractor	Dates of fieldwork
Sevington Railhead geophysical survey	ARC SRH 95	GSB	1995
Boys Hall Road to Sevington Railhead evaluation	ARC BHR 97	MoLAS	5/8/1997 - 12/8/1997
North of Sevington Railhead evaluation	ARC SRH 97	MoLAS	4/11/1997 - 10/11/1997
Boys Hall Balancing Pond	ARC BHB 99	OAU	26/4/1999 - 14/5/1999

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on a narrow band of the Atherfield Clay bordered to the north by the Hythe Beds and to the south by dry valley and alluvial deposits in the Stour Valley. The geological substrate is covered by clay silt soils.
- 1.2.2 The Boys Hall Balancing Pond site lies on ground sloping very gently from *c* 40 to 45 m OD just over 1 km to the north of the East Stour river.
- 1.2.3 Prior to work on the CTRL the land had been under pasture.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.3.1 The assessment of historical and cultural effects of the CTRL identified the area around Boys Hall as an area of archaeological potential. Finds predating the late Iron Age are few, although there is scant evidence of Mesolithic activity just over 1 km to the north-west of the site (URL 1994, no. 1084), and Neolithic and Bronze Age flint has been found *c* 1 km to the east and immediately to the north of Boys Hall Moat (Booth and Everson 1994). Traces of a middle-late Bronze Age field system were found *c* 1.5 km to the south east of the site along the CTRL at West of Blind Lane (URS 1999).

- 1.3.2 Numerous features and finds of late Iron Age, Roman and medieval date have, however, been made in the area around the site, to the north and south of the CTRL, stretching *c* 0.5 km to the east and over 1 km to the west. In the immediate vicinity of the excavation, traces of late Iron Age-early Roman settlement have been found to the south (URL 1994, no. 1234) and south-east (URL 1994, no. 1382) by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT). An evaluation carried out by the Museum of London Archaeological Services (MoLAS) immediately to the north of the Boys Hall Balancing Pond uncovered what may be further traces of this settlement, consisting of ditches and gullies (URL 1997). Additional late Iron Age-early Roman features, dated to *c* 100 BC - AD 200, were discovered during a survey and excavation of Boys Hall Moat itself (Booth and Everson 1995). These finds indicate the existence of an extensive area of late Iron Age-early Roman activity, further traces of which were revealed in the Boys Hall Balancing Pond excavations. Three evaluation trenches dug by the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit (KARU) within the area of the excavation, however, revealed no archaeological features, although the area to the east of the site was identified as a possible focus of activity on the site.
- 1.3.3 Undated remains of what may be a hollow way (URL 1994, no. 1864) found to the south of the excavations, and of a possible trackway or field boundary to the north-east (URL 1994, no. 1086) may have formed further components of this complex of late Iron Age-early Roman remains. A Roman road runs around 1.5 km south of the site (Booth and Everson 1994).
- 1.3.4 Further remains of these periods have also been made slightly further afield. Less than 0.5 km to the west two large late Iron Age ditches (URL 1994, no. 1377) and remains of a Romano-British farmstead, from which pottery dated *c* AD 75-150 was recovered (URL 1994, no. 1380), were found by KARU. A similar distance to the south-east, extensive scatters of Iron Age, Roman and medieval pottery, as well as circular and linear cropmarks have been noted (URL 1994, nos. 1820, 1353 and 1321). Traces of a late Iron Age-early Roman field system as well as other features perhaps indicating a small settlement were found *c* 1.5 km to the south-east along the CTRL at West of Blind Lane (URS 1999). The large Roman roadside settlement at Westhawk Farm lies around 3 km to the south-west of the site (Booth and Lawrence 2000).
- 1.3.5 Significant medieval remains have also been found. The site lies immediately adjacent to Boys Hall Moat, a scheduled ancient monument (Kent SAM 146), which was the site of the moated manor of Sevington, probably dating from the 13th century (Booth and Everson 1995). Ditches and pits dated to *c* 1250-1350 were found by KARU a short distance to the west of the moat (URL 1994, nos. 1378 and 1379). The village of Sevington, a short distance to the east, is mentioned in Domesday Book. The North of Sevington Railhead evaluation (URL 1997) revealed a number of medieval features, including slots and postholes of a possibly 12th century building, which may belong to the northern edge of the medieval village of Sevington.
- 1.3.6 The medieval moat was subsequently surrounded by post-medieval formal gardens (Booth and Everson 1995).

2. ORIGINAL PRIORITIES, AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1.1 Landscape Zone Priorities The priorities set out in the WSI for the detailed excavation and watching briefs in CTRL Project Area 430 (URS 1998) were to recover data to address the following issues:

- Reconstruction of the changing palaeoenvironment for all time periods represented, through ‘on-site’ and ‘off-site’ studies and the interaction with past economies
- Establishing the basis of the rural economy for the area for all time periods, but especially through the recovery of material and environmental remains
- Understanding ritual and ceremonial use of the landscape

2.1.2 Under these broad aims, particular themes of relevance to the Boys Hall Balancing Pond strip, map and sample excavation include:

- Spatial organisation of the landscape and change through time
- The rural economy, with particular emphasis on the recovery of material and environmental remains. Highlighted themes for investigation included the organisation of the landscape, settlement morphology and function, agricultural regimes, natural resource exploitation, trade and the effects of the rise and decline of the Roman administration
- Ritual and ceremonial use of the landscape, specifically late Iron Age and Romano-British burial practises

2.1.3 It was expected that the evidence recovered would mostly relate to the period ‘towns and their rural landscapes’ (sub-periods i, 100 BC-410 AD and ii, 410 AD-1100 AD)

2.2 Fieldwork Event Aims

2.2.1 The aims of the fieldwork event were:

- to provide further evidence of the extent, form and function of late Iron Age-early Roman settlement, and of features associated with the medieval manor house and post-medieval gardens
- to recover environmental and economic evidence

2.3 Fieldwork Methodology and Summary of Excavation Results

2.3.1 The topsoil and subsoil were stripped to the top of the archaeologically significant layers by 360° tracked excavators with toothless buckets under close archaeological supervision. The site was then planned and the features revealed were excavated by hand, pits being half-sectioned, and ditches being sectioned at appropriate points. The features were recorded in a single context recording system, were drawn in plan and section, and were photographed. Samples for environmental analysis were taken from appropriate contexts. Daily records of all activity related to the excavation and watching brief were kept.

2.3.2 The excavated features may belong to four phases of activity. A single sherd of middle Bronze Age pottery is the only evidence to suggest that a series of similarly aligned ditches may have formed part of a field system, and might date from this

period. A series of closely spaced parallel ditches, again probably forming part of a field system, and a cremation, are more reliably dated to the late Iron Age-early Roman period (up to *c* AD 70). One of these ditches and further cremations in the same group contain slightly later pottery, dated to *c* AD 70-200, suggesting continuity of occupation. The latest features consist of a cobbled area and two large post-medieval ditches running across the site parallel to Boys Hall Moat, which are probably related to the formal gardens laid out around the moat in that period.

2.4 Assessment Methodology

- 2.4.1 This assessment report was commissioned by URS following the specification provided by RLE, as discussed with English Heritage and KCC (URS 2000). This specification follows national guidelines prepared by English Heritage and provides additional information regarding the level of detail required in the report and its format. Stuart Foreman (project manager) and Chris Hayden (team leader) managed the production of the report. The specialist work was undertaken by appropriately qualified specialists. Because the quantity of finds was relatively small, all material was assessed.

3. FACTUAL DATA AND QUANTIFICATION

3.1 The Stratigraphic Record

The Features

- 3.1.1 The features found on the site consist of numerous ditches, two tree-throw holes, a group of cremation pits, and a small cobbled surface (Figure 2). Most of the ditches have been divided into three groups on the basis of their date and their position and alignment: a possibly middle Bronze Age group (ditches 11, 16, 54 and 60) in the northern part of the site, a late Iron Age - Roman group in the south-western part of the site (8, 34, 36 and 62) and a post-medieval group (ditches 6, 28 and 52) running across the site.

Stratigraphy

- 3.1.2 There are few significant stratigraphic relationships between these features. The most informative is the relationship of the features with a subsoil layer (2). The prehistoric and Roman features are covered by this layer whilst the post-medieval features are cut into it. It is notable too that whilst one of the tree-throw holes is cut by a late Iron Age-early Roman feature, the other is 'cut' into a later Roman feature.

Phasing

- 3.1.3 The phasing of the site thus depends almost entirely upon the pottery and other datable artefacts found within the features. They suggest that four phases of activity may be tentatively distinguished:

- probably middle Bronze Age
- Late Iron Age - early Roman, up to *c* AD 70
- Later Roman, *c* AD 70 - 200
- Post-medieval

The Middle Bronze Age

- 3.1.4 A single sherd found in the primary fill of a ditch (60) running north-west/south-east in the northern corner of the site is the only evidence for the existence of a middle Bronze Age phase of activity, although the date of the sherd itself is not beyond question. No other artefacts were retrieved from this ditch. It is possible that several other ditches (11, 16, 54) in roughly the same area of the site may also date from this phase. Together these ditches may have formed part of a field system. Nonetheless, a single sherd, especially a worn sherd such as that in question, cannot be regarded as providing firm evidence of their date, and they may be better regarded as being effectively undated. They are, however, covered by the subsoil layer which seals all of the more certainly prehistoric and Roman features, and it seems unlikely that they are later in date than these other features.

Late Iron Age - Early Roman Period

- 3.1.5 Larger quantities of pottery date a series of closely spaced parallel ditches (8, 34 and 36) in the south-west of the site to the late Iron Age-early Roman period. Their common alignment and close spacing suggests either that they defined a trackway, or that they represent different phases of essentially the same boundary. Two of the cluster of five cremations in the south of the site (45 and 46) also contain pottery of

this date. However, one of these (46) also contains later pottery and must therefore be assigned to the following phase.

The Later Roman Period

- 3.1.6 One of the parallel ditches (62) in the south-west of the site contains pottery dated to *c* AD 70-200 in its primary and higher fills. Three of the remaining cremations in the south of the site also contain pottery of similar date. (The other cremation was not associated with any pottery and is thus undated. Given its location amidst the other cremations it must, however, date from the same general phase.) These finds indicate continuity both in the definition of the boundary in the south-west of the site and of burial in the south.

The Post-Medieval Period

- 3.1.7 Two similar large ditches (6 and 28) running north-east/south-west across the site parallel to Boys Hall Moat and occupying similar relative stratigraphic positions have been dated to the post-medieval period on the basis of the 18th century glass and ceramic building material of similar date found within them. They are probably related to the formal gardens which were laid out around the moat. One of them (ditch 28) was recut at least three times.
- 3.1.8 A cobbled surface found at the south-western end of one of these ditches (lying over a late Iron Age-early Roman ditch but not clearly stratigraphically related to the post-medieval ditch) is probably also post-medieval in date, although it contained a few late Iron Age-early Roman sherds.
- 3.1.9 Two gullies in the northern part of the site (13 and 52) contained no datable artefacts. Since, however, they overlie the subsoil layer (2) they are likely to be relatively late in date. One of them (52) was cut after one of the post-medieval ditches (28) was originally cut, but before its last recut, and thus must also be post-medieval in date.

Residuality and Disturbance

- 3.1.10 Not surprisingly, given the intercutting of features dating from differing phases, there is clear evidence for the incorporation of residual material into later features. Single sherds of late Iron Age-early Roman pottery were found in one of the post-medieval ditches (in the same context (5) as some of the 18th century glass) and in the cobbled surface. Larger quantities of pottery of the same date were also found in the upper fill of one of the later Roman ditches (62). There is, however, no clear indication of other disturbance or of intrusive material.

Truncation

- 3.1.11 With the exception of the post-medieval ditches, and the latest of the ditches in the south-west (62), most of the features are preserved to only very shallow depths, and thus appear to have been quite severely truncated. The cremations clearly reveal the extent of the truncation, all of the vessels being damaged by ploughing and the base of the pot only surviving in cremation 39. No cuts for pits to contain the vessels in which most of the cremations were placed could be identified.

Artefact Distributions

- 3.1.12 There are few finds other than pottery and so no particular concentrations or spatial patterns are apparent.

3.2 The Artefactual Record

Prehistoric Pottery (Appendix 1)

- 3.2.1 A single sherd of prehistoric pottery was recovered from the primary fill of ditch 60. Its coarse calcined flint temper suggests that it dates from the middle Bronze Age. It provides the only evidence for activity on the site in this phase.

Late Iron Age and Roman Pottery (Appendix 1)

- 3.2.2 The excavation yielded 517 sherds (3439 g) of late Iron Age and Early Roman pottery from 22 contexts, of which 414 sherds (2488 g) are from Roman cremation vessels.
- 3.2.3 Two phases of late Iron Age and Roman occupation can be distinguished. There are 30 sherds from the Phase 2 features, dated to the late Iron Age - AD 70, made up almost entirely of badly-broken up 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware bodysherds. The *c* AD 70-200 dated Phase 3 pottery is for the most part equally broken-up but the five partially complete *c* AD 43-100 dated cremation pots, spanning both phases, are of considerably greater interest.

Ceramic Building Material (Appendix 1)

- 3.2.4 A small assemblage of ceramic building materials, often very fragmented but including half a brick and two fragments of roofing tile were found. One fragment, perhaps of Roman date, was found in the upper fill of ditch 62. Fragments of plain roofing tiles and half a brick, probably dating from the 18th - 20th centuries were found in the post-medieval ditches, 6 and 28. Further fragments of plain tile, probably intrusive, were found in ditch 62.

Fired Clay (Appendix 1)

- 3.2.5 Unidentifiable fragments of fired clay were recovered from contexts 56 and 63, both fills of ditch 62, dated to Phase 3.

Worked Flint (Appendix 2)

- 3.2.6 Two plough-damaged flint flakes were recovered from the site. Both have been hard-hammer struck and one has a hinge fracture. One flake may have come from a discoidal core. Neither of the flakes is closely datable.

Stone (Appendix 2)

- 3.2.7 Two fragments of Greensand and one of Ironstone were recovered. All are unworked and of local origin.

Glass (Appendix 3)

- 3.2.8 Single fragments of bottles were found in the primary fill of post-medieval ditch 6, and in the upper of fill of post-medieval ditch 28. Both date from the 18th century or early in the 19th century. They provide the most direct dating evidence for the filling of these ditches. The fragment from ditch 28 bears a partly decipherable seal.

Metalwork (Appendix 4)

- 3.2.9 Two iron nails were found, one in the primary fill of post-medieval ditch 6 and the other in the fill of early Roman cremation 43.

3.3 The Environmental Record

Human Bone (Appendix 5)

- 3.3.1 Five deposits of cremated human bone in pottery vessels were located in the south-eastern corner of the site. All are datable to the late Iron Age-early Roman period. Assessment suggested the possible presence of two adults, a male and a female. No identification of the remaining deposits was possible.

Animal Bone (Appendix 6)

- 3.3.2 Two fragments of bone (27 g) were retrieved by hand from the middle fill of ditch 62 and the single fill of a tree-throw hole (64). A single cattle tooth was identified from the tree-throw hole. The bone fragment from the ditch was a piece of a long bone of medium size (sheep/pig size). The bones had a small amount of root damage on the external surface of the bone.

Charcoal (Appendix 7)

- 3.3.3 Five samples from Roman cremation urns were submitted for assessment of the wood charcoal. Four of the flots produced identifiable charcoal fragments although the quantities varied. Only two taxa were identified - *Quercus* sp. (oak) and Maloideae (hawthorn, apple, pear etc.) - of which oak appeared to be predominant.

Shell (Appendix 8)

- 3.3.4 A single fragment of oyster shell was recovered from the topsoil.

3.4 Archive Storage and Curation

- 3.4.1 The material recovered from the site has been stored according to the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation conservation guidelines. It requires no special conservation measures.
- 3.4.2 The stone is unworked and local and should be discarded. The ceramic building material, fired clay and oyster shell also contribute little to the interpretation of the site and need not be retained. If the x-rays are retained, the nails may also be discarded.
- 3.4.3 The archive index has been updated and is shown below (Table 2).

Table 2: Archive index table

ITEM	NUMBER OF ITEMS, BOXES OR OTHER	NUMBER OF FRAGMENTS OR LITRES	CONDITION (NO. OF ITEMS) (W=washed; UW=unwashed; M=marked; P=processed; UP=unprocessed; D=digitised; I=indexed)
Contexts records	71	-	I
A1 plans	4	-	I, D
A4 plans	1	-	I, D
A1 sections	1	-	I
A4 sections	13	-	I
Films (monochrome) S=slide; PR=print	1	-	I
Films (Colour) S=slide; PR=print	4	-	I
Lithics	-	2	W, M
Pottery	1 size 2	520	W, M
CBM	see Misc.	17	W, M
Stone	see Misc.	3	W, M
Metalwork	see Misc.	2	W, M
Glass	1 size 4	2	W, M
Misc.	1 size 2	-	
Human Bone	-	5	W, M
Animal Bone	see Misc.	2	W, M
Shell	see Misc.	1	W, M
Soil Samples (bulk)	5	66.5 ml*	P

* flot size

Key to box sizes

Size 2 = Half box
Size 4 = Eighth box

391mm x 238mm x 100mm (0.0093m³)
213 mm x 102 mm x 80 mm (0.00017m³)

4. STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

4.1 The Stratigraphic Record

- 4.1.1 The excavation provided a clear record of the extent and character of the late Iron Age-Roman features on the site, and a few features probably associated with the formal gardens laid out around the moat.
- 4.1.2 The stratigraphy on the site is generally straightforward, there being few significant stratigraphic relationships. Almost all of the features can be dated only by the pottery and other datable artefacts they contain. Aside from pottery few other artefacts were recovered. There is thus very limited potential for further significant stratigraphic or spatial analysis of the site itself. The few features that do survive form generally coherent groups, both spatially and chronologically.
- 4.1.3 The possibly middle Bronze Age and the late Iron Age - Roman ditches probably formed parts of field systems, perhaps including in the late Iron Age-Roman period a trackway.
- 4.1.4 The extent of the features exposed on the site itself was, however, limited and insufficient to prove this interpretation. Similar features of late Iron Age and Roman (but not middle Bronze Age) date have, however, been found in excavations to the north, south and east of the site (see above, 1.3), as indeed at many other points along the CTRL (eg East of Station Road (ARC STR 99), West of Blind Lane (ARC BLN 98), East of Boarley Farm (ARC BFE 98) and Chapel Mill (ARC CML 99)). Further understanding of the excavation might, therefore, be achieved by relating the excavated features more closely to those found in surrounding areas. Although the excavation itself does not provide an extensive picture of these field systems, if it can be related to results of surrounding investigations, it may have the potential to contribute to an understanding of the organisation of the landscape and the exploitation of natural resources. Unfortunately no environmental or economic evidence was recovered from the site which might have allowed the effects of the establishment of the field systems to be assessed.
- 4.1.5 The cremations have also been dated to the late Iron Age-Roman period. Since they are severely truncated, they do not have the potential to reveal much of the detail of burial practices.
- 4.1.6 The cremations may, however, have some significance in terms of the ritual organisation of the landscape. It is unfortunate in this respect that the location of any associated settlement is unknown. Roman burials were traditionally placed outside settlements, and these cremations may, therefore, imply the existence of a settlement nearby. Similar associations of cremations with field systems have been found elsewhere along the CTRL (eg Chapel Mill (ARC CML 99)).
- 4.1.7 The post-medieval ditches were probably related to the laying out of the formal gardens around the moat. They thus provide a small insight into one way in which land use and organisation changed over time.

4.2 The Artefactual Record

Prehistoric Pottery (Appendix 1)

- 4.2.1 The single sherd of possible Bronze Age date is of significance only as dating evidence for the site itself. Further comparison of the fabric of the sherd with those

from larger, more securely datable assemblages, might confirm its date. It is recommended that the sherd is retained.

Late Iron Age and Roman Pottery (Appendix 1)

- 4.2.2 The principal value of the small pottery assemblage is as dating evidence for the site. Most of the material has little potential for further research in pursuit of the CTRL project aims.
- 4.2.3 The chief exception to this are the cremation pots, which provide evidence for burial practice and thus address the CTRL project's wider Landscape Zone Priorities concerning change and continuity in burial practices between the late Iron Age and early Roman period.
- 4.2.4 The Canterbury kilns flagon present in the assemblage will have arrived at the site as a container for traded produce, possibly wine. It is therefore of interest in relation to CTRL research aims concerning the rural economy and trade, the types of goods that reached rural sites of this type, and their sources.

Ceramic Building Material (Appendix 1)

- 4.2.5 The fragmentary ceramic building material, occurring in such small quantities, has little potential either for dating or for interpreting the site. Such small fragments of roof tile and one broken brick do not necessarily even derive from primary use at the site itself. For this reason, and because the material lacks any intrinsic interest, no further work is required. The material need not be retained.

Fired Clay (Appendix 1)

- 4.2.6 The fragments of unidentified fired clay contribute very little to the understanding of the site and do not warrant further consideration. The material may be discarded.

Worked Flint (Appendix 2)

- 4.2.7 The material has very limited potential given the numbers of pieces and the contexts it came from. It does however indicate prehistoric activity in the general area.

Stone (Appendix 2)

- 4.2.8 Since no worked or exotic stone was found no further work is recommended. The material may be discarded.

Glass (Appendix 3)

- 4.2.9 The two fragments of post-medieval glass provide dating evidence for the post-medieval features on the site. They otherwise have little potential to address the research aims of the CTRL project.

Metalwork (Appendix 4)

- 4.2.10 The two nails, from contexts of very different date, are insufficient to prove the existence of built structures on the site. The nail found in the fill of the cremation is unlikely to have been deposited deliberately and may instead be intrusive, or an accidental inclusion. These two finds are of little help in interpreting the site and contribute nothing to the wider CTRL research aims. No further work is required.

4.3 The Environmental Record

Human Bone (Appendix 5)

- 4.3.1 The potential of the cremated remains is limited due to the level of truncation caused by later ploughing. Cremation 44 is, however, substantial and well preserved and merits further analysis, if only to determine the number of individuals present. The material should be retained.

Animal Bone (Appendix 6)

- 4.3.2 The one identified cattle tooth does not provide any information regarding the site other than the presence of cattle. It is not recommended that further work be done on this small assemblage, and the material need not be retained.

Charcoal (Appendix 7)

- 4.3.3 The predominance of a single taxon in prehistoric cremation assemblages has been noted at other sites and may relate to the ritual selection of fuelwood for the cremation pyre. Comparison with other material may shed further light on the burial practices of the late Iron Age and Early Roman period. Although full analysis of these samples is unlikely to provide more information on the nature of their composition, than ascertained at the assessment, a full discussion of the charcoal from these cremation deposits will allow valuable comparisons to be made with other sites, both regionally and nationally. It is recommended that the residues be retained.

Shell (Appendix 8)

- 4.3.4 The state of preservation of the fragment is poor and the quantity insufficient to enable statistical comparisons of their characteristics on either an intrasite or intersite basis. The find has no potential to address the CTRL research aims, and the material may be discarded.

4.4 Overall Potential

- 4.4.1 In terms of the original Fieldwork Event Aims for the site, the data offer very limited potential for further work. The ditches and cremations located at Boys Hall Balancing Pond add little new information concerning the nature of this late Iron Age and Roman settlement, and there is very little useful evidence in the finds assemblages. The North of Sevington evaluation revealed limited evidence of structural features of 12th to 13th century date, but no further medieval activity was located at the Boys Hall Balancing Pond site. Post-medieval ditches identified at Boys Hall Balancing Pond are probably associated with the gardens of the nearby manor house, although there is little evidence for their function.

- 4.4.2 The data have the potential to make a limited contribution to the wider Landscape Zone Priorities of the CTRL project, particularly in terms of understanding the organisation and division of the landscape over time, and change and continuity in burial practice.

Landscape Zone Priorities relating to the organisation of the landscape over time

Field systems

- 4.4.3 Field systems were relatively unknown in Kent prior to work on the CTRL and the examples found on the site contribute new data for the study of landscape organisation over time. Although the dating evidence is poor, one of them may date

to the middle Bronze Age and would thus be amongst the earlier examples known. The other appears to have continued in use from the late Iron Age into the 2nd century AD. Only very limited parts of these systems were revealed within the excavation, however, and the excavation itself thus reveals little of their wider form.

- 4.4.4 An attempt to relate them to the similar late Iron Age-Roman evidence found in the numerous investigations in areas surrounding the site (see above 1.3) would probably give a more extensive picture of how the local landscape was organised in that period. However, most of the fieldwork in the surrounding area has been in the form of trench evaluations which have not led on to open area excavation. This severely limits the potential of the data for wider landscape analysis. There is very little evidence for how reorganisation of the landscape affected the environment.
- 4.4.5 The site has limited intrinsic potential, but it adds to data for the organisation of the rural landscape in the late Iron Age and early Roman period, when considered in conjunction with other sites in the Wealden Greensand Landscape Zone. CTRL offers a number of broadly comparable sites, which appear to represent peripheral off-site activity, field systems and low-level rural craft activity. Similar evidence has occurred at South of Beechbrook Wood, Lodge Wood, West of Blind Lane, North of Westenhanger Castle and East of Station Road.
- 4.4.6 The North of Sevington Railhead evaluation revealed a number of structural features of 12th to 13th century date. These suggest the presence of timber buildings at this date, close to the present line of Church Road. The very limited nature of this evaluation evidence offers little potential for further analysis in pursuit of the CTRL research aims, beyond perhaps providing some indication of the extent of the village at that date. The information is primarily of local interest, and adds to information about the dating and extent of the village in the medieval period.
- 4.4.7 The evidence for the transformation of the Boys Hall Balancing Pond site in the post-medieval period probably relates to the formal gardens which were laid out around the moat. Although this provides an example of a new form of landuse, the features themselves provide little indication of the character of this change, and little other evidence dating from this phase was found. This evidence is, therefore, of interest primarily in relation to the later history of Boys Hall Moat.

Landscape Zone priorities relating to change and continuity in burial practices between the late Iron Age and the Roman period

- 4.4.8 The cremations provide an example of ritual practices and the ritual organisation of the landscape. Several other examples of similarly dated burials have been found along the CTRL (eg at South of Beechbrook Wood (ARC BWD 98), Chapel Mill (ARC CML 99), Tutt Hill (ARC 430/83+800 - 84+900), Thurnham villa (ARC THM 98)), to add to those known elsewhere (eg Westhawk Farm). At Chapel Mill and South of Beechbrook Wood, as here, they are associated with a field system. It is unfortunate that here the location of any associated settlement and the wider layout of the field system is unknown. Their significance in terms of the ritual organisation of the landscape may become more apparent if the features on the site can be related to those found in the surrounding area.
- 4.4.9 They are relatively humble burials, probably placed within single vessels in simple pits with no other accompanying grave goods other than two additional vessels in one. One of the cremations was not associated with any pottery. Although because they are damaged they may not reveal much of the detail of burial practices beyond what the charcoal indicates, such small, rural cemeteries of this period associated with peasant settlement are not well known in south-east England (Drewett, Rudling and Gardiner 1988, 233). This small group of burials thus adds useful data

concerning the range of burial practices used in the late Iron Age and Roman period. Again, their significance will be most apparent when they are compared with a larger group of burials of similar date, including the much larger cemeteries such as the Waterloo Connection cemetery (ARC NBR 98), from along the CTRL and elsewhere.

4.5 Popular Presentation

- 4.5.1 Of the few features found, the cremations have perhaps the greatest potential to contribute to a popular presentation. They were however badly damaged and are thus not photogenic. Like the other features they are perhaps most interesting when placed in a wider context, in this case, of the range of late Iron Age-Roman burial practices.

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APPENDIX 1 - CERAMICS

1.1 Assessment of the Prehistoric Pottery

by Alistair Barclay

Introduction

- 1.1.1 A single body sherd of possible middle Bronze Age date was recovered during the excavation. The sherd was collected by hand. The sherd is in a worn condition and could therefore be residual.

Methodology

- 1.1.2 The sherd was weighed and dated by fabric analysis with reference to published assemblages.

Quantification

- 1.1.3 The sherd's fabric contains coarse calcined flint which is most likely to be of middle Bronze Age (Deverel-Rimbury) date, although similar fabrics can occur in the Neolithic and late Bronze Age (Table 1).

Provenance

- 1.1.4 The single prehistoric sherd was from the primary fill, context 59, of ditch 60. It could, however, be residual.

Conservation

- 1.1.5 The sherd has no specific needs for long term storage. As the only datable sherd from the ditch it should be retained.

Comparative material

- 1.1.6 This type of fabric is common on sites of middle Bronze Age date in Kent and across much of south-east England. However, similar fabrics do sometimes occur on Neolithic sites and it is not impossible that the sherd is of an earlier date.

Potential for further work

- 1.1.7 The single sherd is of value only as dating evidence for middle Bronze Age activity. Comparison with more securely dated fabrics from elsewhere should help to confirm the date as middle Bronze Age. There is no potential for any further work.

Table 1: Quantification of prehistoric pottery

Context	Count	Weight (g)	Period	Comments
59	1	6	middle Bronze Age?	Body sherd with coarse calcined flint temper

1.2 Assessment of the Late Iron Age and Roman Pottery

by Malcolm Lyne

Introduction

- 1.2.1 Small amounts of late Iron Age to early Roman pottery were recovered during excavation on the site. Excavation of the various ditches containing this material was restricted to sampling by sections, although the cremations were excavated in their entirety. The prime aims of the study of this material were to date the occupation of the site and to obtain information about local burial practices from the cremation vessels.

Methodology

- 1.2.2 All of the pottery assemblages were subjected to general sherd count and weighing. None of them were considered suitable for more detailed quantification because of the small size of the assemblages and the subsequent lack of good, diagnostic profiles. The burial vessels are, however, dealt with in some detail below.
- 1.2.3 Fabrics were classified with the aid of a x8 lens with built-in metric scale for determining the sizes, nature, form and frequency of inclusions. Finer fabrics were further examined using a x30 magnification pocket microscope with built-in artificial illumination source.
- 1.2.4 Fabrics were classified using the Canterbury Archaeological Trust's codings (Macpherson-Grant et al. 1995) where applicable.

Quantification

- 1.2.5 The excavation yielded 517 sherds (3439 g) of pottery from 22 contexts, of which 414 sherds (2488 g) are from the five cremation vessels (Table 2). Table 3 gives the breakdown of the pottery other than the cremation vessels by period.
- 1.2.6 The site lies in an area of east Kent dominated by 'Belgic' grog-tempered wares throughout the late Iron Age and well into the second century. This creates problems in dating when dealing with small assemblages where only bodysherds from grog-tempered vessels are present. Some of the assemblages from this site are of that type (7, 32, 35, 41 and 51) and are difficult to date with any precision. They could be entirely late Iron Age in date or post-Conquest. Most of the pottery from features other than cremations is very broken up.

Provenance

- 1.2.7 None of the occupation assemblages from the site could be regarded as a good group: they are all very small, deficient in diagnostic sherds and for the most part of limited value in the dating of features. Some of the very small ditch groups could even be entirely residual.
- 1.2.8 The cremation vessels are of considerably greater value for further study but have in some cases suffered from plough truncation.
- 1.2.9 All of the cremation pots belong to the period *c* AD 43-100: cremation 39 was accompanied by just a single basal sherd from a beaker in Upchurch ware (fabric R16) and cremation 43 had a truncated flagon in Patchgrove ware (fabric R68). Cremation 45 was accompanied the fragmentary remains of a closed form in black 'Belgic' fabric B3, cremation 46 by a truncated Hoo flagon and an Upchurch ware platter and cremation 48 by rim sherds from a jar in fabric B2.1.

Conservation

- 1.2.10 The pots from cremations 43, 45 and 46 require sticking but otherwise there is no need for further conservation. All of the sherds should be retained.

Comparative material

- 1.2.11 The domination of the pottery assemblages by grog-tempered wares is typical of late Iron Age and early Roman east Kent but the very fragmentary nature and small quantities of the occupational material make the citing of parallels unproductive. The truncated nature of all but one of the cremation pots has also made the search for parallels difficult. The most important comparisons will be with material found in numerous excavations in the immediate vicinity, to aid interpretation of this group of sites.

Potential for further work

- 1.2.12 The ability of the pottery from this site to contribute to the CTRL project aims is limited. The only way in which the material contributes at all significantly is in the ritual aspects, where further study of the cremation pots may reveal something about local early Roman burial practices. The Canterbury kilns flagon with traces of bitumen or resin sealant in the neck, from context 61, is of interest as evidence of local trade out of Canterbury, perhaps in a commodity such as wine. The assemblage can therefore provide additional data for the wider CTRL Landscape Zone Priorities covering rural economy and trade, and burial practice and ritual.

Table 2: Summary of late Iron Age and Roman pottery

Context	Count	Weight (g)	Period	Comments
5	1	19	LIA-AD 70	B2.1 jar
7	10	121	LIA-AD 70+	B2 combed jars
29	36	240	AD 43-70+	B2 R15 jars
32	2	31	LIA-AD 70+	B2 jars
35	6	40	LIA-AD 70+	B2 jars
37	3	21	LIA-AD 70+	B2.1 jars
39	1	7	c AD 50-250	R16
41	3	5	LIA-AD 70+	B2 jar
43	114	1100	AD 43-100	B2.1 flagon, Pollard type 33
44	100	491	AD 43-100	same vessel as in 43
45	26	62	LIA-AD 70	B3 jar
48	20	340	LIA-AD 70	B2.1 jar
49	102	85	early 2 nd century	R43, DR27, R17 flagon
50	51	403	AD 70-130	R16 platter
51	6	36	LIA-AD 70	B2.1 jars
56	13	159	AD 70-150	R5 bowl, B2 jars, R16 closed
57	3	65	AD 70-150	B2 jars, R5 lid
58	5	37	AD 70-150	Br jar, R42
61	14	173	AD 70-200	R74.3 flagon with bitumen sealant in neck
63	1	4	LIA-AD 70+	B2 jar

Table 3: Main groups of pottery by phase (excluding cremation vessels)

Phase	Main Locations	Spot date	no. of contexts	Count	Weight (g)
2	Ditches 2, 34, 36	Late Iron Age -	6	30	254

		<i>c</i> AD 70			
3	Ditch 62	<i>c</i> AD 70 - 200	5	71	674
u/s	Topsoil, post-medieval ditch 6, unstratified	-	3	4	63
<i>Total</i>			<i>14</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>991</i>

1.3 Assessment of the Ceramic Building Material and Fired Clay

by Terence Paul Smith

Introduction

- 1.3.1 A small assemblage of ceramic building materials was recovered. Most fragments are tiny, although a few pieces are of larger size. The material comprises one half brick, two fragments of plain roofing tile, and a number of unidentifiable fragments; there is also a fragment of possible Roman ceramic building material.

Methodology

- 1.3.2 All materials were examined microscopically (×10) and have been recorded by count and weight. Where appropriate, comparisons were made with the MoL fabric series. Brief fabric descriptions are included of the more significant material. No full dimensions are preserved.

Quantification, Provenance and Comparative Material

- 1.3.3 The building material and fired clay is quantified by context in Table 4.

Unidentifiable fired clay

- 1.3.4 Unidentifiable fragments of fired clay were recovered from contexts 56 and 63, both fills of ditch 62, dated to the later Roman period. They do not warrant further consideration.

Possibly Roman ceramic building material

- 1.3.5 A fragment from context 29, the upper fill of later Roman ditch 62 is in a fairly coarse red fabric with some iron oxides and shell. It is abraded and is possibly, but not certainly, of Roman date.

Plain roofing tiles

- 1.3.6 Fragments of plain roofing tiles (peg tiles) were recovered from context 63, fill of later Roman ditch 62 and from context 68, fill of post-medieval ditch 28. They are in slightly different but perhaps related fine fabrics, orange or light brown in colour. Thicknesses are shown in Table 5. No other dimensions are preserved. No peg/nail holes remain in the fragments.

- 1.3.7 Plain tiles changed little over time after their introduction in the 12th century and it is not possible to suggest a date for these pieces. The fragment in later Roman ditch 62 may be intrusive, perhaps becoming deposited when ditch 6 was cut through it.

Brick

- 1.3.8 An incomplete brick (half bat) was recovered from context 5, the primary fill of post-medieval ditch 6. It is a handmade product with a 'lumpy' orange fabric with

some iron oxide, small stones, and yellowish silty bands. The arrises are quite sharp. Its breadth is 118 mm and its thickness 60-63 mm. There is mortar on its broken edge, but this does not necessarily indicate reuse since bricks are frequently used as half bats in walls. It is certainly post-Tudor in date, and probably dates from the 18th or 19th century, possibly even from the early 20th century.

Conservation

- 1.3.9 Since this material contributes so little to the understanding of the site and has very little intrinsic importance, permanent retention is not recommended.

Potential for further work

- 1.3.10 This fragmentary material, occurring in such small quantities, has little potential either for dating or for interpreting the site. Such small fragments of roof tile and one broken brick do not necessarily even derive from primary use at the site itself. For this reason, and because the material lacks any intrinsic interest, no further work is required on it. For publication, details of the building material may be integrated with the main text, using data from this report. Further specialist input is not required.

Table 4: Summary of ceramic building material and fired clay

Context	Count	Weight (g)	Type	Period	Comments
5	1	1160	Brick	?	Prob. C18 or later
29	1	55	?	?	Roman?
56	1	5	?	?	Fired clay
63	1	10	Peg	?	Not MoL fabric
63	14	5	?	?	Fired ceramic
68	1	40	Peg	?	Not MoL fabric
3716-2	1	5	?	?	Fired clay
3717-4	1	10	?	?	Fired clay
3717-4	4	200	Peg	?	Various fabrics

Table 5: Thicknesses of plain roofing tiles

Context	Thickness (mm)	Median (mm)
63	12	12
68	10	10

APPENDIX 2 - LITHICS

2.1 Assessment of the Worked Flint

by Philippa Bradley

Introduction

- 2.1.1 Two worked flakes were recovered from this site, both of which were redeposited.

Methodology

- 2.1.2 The flint was briefly scanned, with information regarding dating, technology and general condition being noted. The material was added to an Access database.

Quantification

- 2.1.3 Two struck flakes, one possibly from a discoidal core, were found (Table 6).

Provenance

- 2.1.4 One piece of flint came from context 2, a subsoil layer and one from context 29, the upper fill of later Roman ditch 62.

Condition

- 2.1.5 The flint has suffered some post-depositional damage. The flint is very lightly corticated.

Comparative material

- 2.1.6 A little flint was recovered from excavations conducted by OAU during work at Boys Hall Moat (Bradley 1994, 424). Flint has also been recovered from fieldwalking for the CTRL project within the general vicinity of this site.

Potential for further work

- 2.1.7 The material has very limited potential given the numbers of pieces and the contexts it came from. It does however indicate prehistoric activity in the general area.

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2.2 Assessment of the Stone

by Ruth Shaffrey

Methodology

- 2.2.1 All retained stone was examined.

Quantifications

- 2.2.2 Three pieces of stone were recovered during the excavations. These are listed in Table 7.

Provenance

- 2.2.3 The few pieces of stone from this site were all of Greensand or Ironstone, both of which would have been available locally. All of the material appears to be unworked.

Conservation

- 2.2.4 No conservation is required. All stone may be discarded.

Potential for further work

- 2.2.5 No further work is recommended.

Table 6: Summary of worked flint

Context	Count	Period	Comments
2	1	Unident	Hard-hammer struck flake, possibly from a discoidal core
29	1	Unident	Hard-hammer struck flake

Table 7: Summary of stone

Context	Count	Material	Comments
7	1	Greensand	Subrounded chunk
5	1	Ironstone	Fragment
31	1	Greensand	Possibly slightly shaped though more likely to be unworked.

APPENDIX 3 - GLASS

3.1 Assessment of the Glass

by Cecily Cropper

Introduction, Methodology, Quantification and Provenance

- 3.1.1 Two fragments of glass were recovered from the primary and upper fills of the two post-medieval ditches (Table 8). They were examined visually. Both fragments can be dated to the late 18th or early 19th century. The detailed circular seal from context 72 bears an embossed crown above a shield. The shield is split into nine compartments containing birds' heads, crosses, rampant lions and an indistinct design around a central star. The incomplete inscription around the outside reads 'PYRMONT WATH—SENER'.

Conservation and Potential for further work

- 3.1.2 Although, aside from dating the ditches, they have little potential to contribute to any of the CTRL research aims, they form an interesting assemblage and thus should be retained. Further work would be required to identify the maker and origin of the seal.

Table 8: Summary of glass

Context	Count	Type	Part	Period
5	1	Bottle	Finish	E-M18 C
72	1	Bottle	Seal	18 C+

APPENDIX 4 - METALWORK

4.1 Assessment of the Metalwork

by Valerie Diez

- 4.1.1 Two iron nails were found, one in the primary fill of post-medieval ditch 6 and the other in the fill of late Iron Age cremation 43 (Table 9). Both nails have been x-rayed and visually identified. Both are poorly preserved. They are insufficient to provide evidence for the existence of structures on the site. The nail found in the fill of the cremation is unlikely to have been deliberately deposited, and may instead be residual or an accidental inclusion. If the x-rays are deposited with the site archive the nails may be discarded. They contribute little to the interpretation of the site, or to the wider CTRL research aims, and no further work is, therefore, required.

Table 9: Summary of metalwork

Context	Material	Count	Period	Comments (description)
5	Fe	1	Post-Med	nail
44	Fe	1	LIA	nail

APPENDIX 5 - HUMAN REMAINS

5.1 Assessment of the Cremated Human Bone

by Angela Boyle

Introduction

- 5.1.1 Five deposits of cremated human bone in pottery vessels were recovered by hand during excavation works. These were recovered as soil samples and were subsequently wet-sieved. Material less than 2 mm has not yet been sorted. The study of the material is aimed at achieving both of the fieldwork event aims specified in section 2.2 above.

Methodology

- 5.1.2 Material was quantified by weight and scanned in order to determine age, sex, and potential for further analysis. Given the small size of the assemblage a decision was made to scan all of it. Each deposit was recorded on a pro forma record sheet which includes context, context type, period, weight, identifiable fragments, colour and minimum number of individuals.

Quantification

- 5.1.3 Five cremations were found, and are quantified and described in Table 10. Very little survived of all but one of them, in which the remains of two individuals, perhaps one male and one female, were identified.

Provenance

- 5.1.4 The cremations were located in a cluster in the south-eastern corner of the site. All were originally placed in vessels which had been truncated by later ploughing. Only the base of the pot survived in the case of 39. Four of the cremations were severely truncated as can be demonstrated by their weight (see Table 10). Four of the cremations were associated with pottery vessels and as such are well-dated. Preservation is poor due to the level of truncation by later ploughing. Four of the cremations were associated with charcoal which in each case was identified as oak.

Conservation

- 5.1.5 Further analysis of cremation (44) would not conflict with long term storage. The material does not require any conservation for the purposes of long-term storage.

Comparative material

- 5.1.6 Small rural cemeteries associated with peasant settlement of this period are not well known in the south-east of England (Drewett, Rudling and Gardiner 1988, 233) and for this reason the small group excavated at this site is a significant addition to our understanding of the burial rites of the early Roman period. Their significance will be more apparent when they are compared with larger groups of burials of similar date from along the CTRL and elsewhere.

Potential for further work

- 5.1.7 The potential of this assemblage is limited by its small size as a group and by the poor preservation of the cremations due to truncation. Only cremation 44 is of substantial size and merits more detailed osteological analysis. Scanning of this deposit has suggested the possibility that two individuals are represented.

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Table 10: Summary of cremated human bone

Context	Context type	Period	Weight (g)	Identifiable fragments	Colour	Minimum number of individuals
39	Pot and fill	c. AD 50-250	18	None	white	?
40	Charcoal layer	c. AD 43-100	7	Skull vault	white	?
44	Fill of pot	c. AD 43-100	1361	Skull vault, mandible, third molars, mastoid, rib, radius, ulna, fibula	white	2? (male and female?)
45	Fill of pot	LIA-AD 70	22	None	white	?
48	Fill of pot	LIA-AD 70	21	Long bone-upper limb	white	?

APPENDIX 6 - FAUNAL REMAINS

6.1 Assessment of the Animal Bone

by Bethan Charles

Introduction

- 6.1.1 Two fragments of bone (27 g) were retrieved by hand during excavation at Boys Hall Balancing Pond.

Methodology

- 6.1.2 The assemblage was recorded through the use of a simple recording sheet.

Quantification

- 6.1.3 Only one cattle tooth from a tree-throw hole dated as later than the late Iron Age to early Roman ditches was identified to species (Table 11). The other fragment of bone was a fragment of a medium sized (sheep or pig size) long bone found in the middle fill of ditch 62, dated to AD 70-150.

Provenance

- 6.1.4 The bones were not in particularly good condition with a small amount of root damage on the surface of the bone. It is likely that only small number of bones were recovered because of the acidic nature of the soil.

Potential for further work

- 6.1.5 The one identified cattle tooth does not provide any information regarding the site other than the presence of cattle. It is not recommended that further work be done on this small assemblage.

Table 11: Summary of identified animal bones

Context	Interpretation	Period	% of identified fragments	Count	Weight (grams)
			Cattle		
58	Tree hole	Later than LIA - E Roman ditches	100	1	25

APPENDIX 7 - PLANT REMAINS

7.1 Assessment of the Charcoal

by Dana Challinor

Introduction

- 7.1.1 A total of five samples were taken during the excavation from the deposits of five cremation urns, which were sampled in their entirety for the recovery of charred plant remains and cremated bone. The cremation urns were dated to the late Iron Age and early Roman period. The purpose in sampling was to examine the evidence for change and continuity in burial practices between the late Iron Age and the Roman period.

Methodology

- 7.1.2 All five of the samples taken were processed and assessed. The volume of soil processed ranged from 1 litre to 7 litres. The samples were processed by flotation in a modified Siraf-type machine, with the flots collected onto a 250µm mesh. The flots were air-dried and divided into fractions using a set of sieves. Fragments of charcoal were randomly extracted, fractured and examined in transverse section under a binocular microscope at x10 and x20 magnification. Fragments caught in the >2mm sized sieves were quantified as identifiable. In the case of large flots, a sample of *circa* 20% was examined. The flots were also scanned for the presence of any other charred plant remains.

Quantification

- 7.1.3 A total of five samples was assessed, of which four produced identifiable wood charcoal (Table 12). Two taxa were identified - *Quercus* sp. (oak) and Maloideae (hawthorn, apple, pear etc.). Ring-porous taxa, and particularly *Quercus*, are easily recognisable at low magnification, although the identification of Maloideae is tentative. It appeared from the way in which the charcoal had fragmented that most of the flots contained only *Quercus* charcoal. Indeed, non-oak charcoal was noted in only one sample (context 39). No other charred plant remains were present.

Provenance

- 7.1.4 Most of the cremation urns were dated to the early Roman period and one was late Iron Age in date, although the close spacing of the features suggests that the cremation urns were more or less contemporaneous. Certainly, the evidence from the charcoal suggests continuity in burial practice. The preservation of the charcoal was reasonable, but the concentration was low, which is to be expected in burial urns where the bone has been carefully removed from the pyre remains. The charcoal fragments were too small in size to provide information on activities such as woodland management.

Conservation

- 7.1.5 The flots are in a stable condition and present no problems for long-term storage and archive.

Comparative material

- 7.1.6 The predominance of a single taxon in prehistoric cremation assemblages, indicating the use of a single tree or specifically selected species in ritual activities, has been noted at Radley Barrow Hills (Thompson 1999, 352) and at Rollright Stones (Straker 1988). It has also been suggested that the abundance of oak or ash in

cremation deposits, compared to other species, is a result of the pyre structure; the timber from these trees providing the supports in a central position, less likely to have been totally reduced to ash (Gale 1997, 82). There has been little publication on Iron Age and Roman charcoal from cremation deposits (Gale 1997, 77) so there are few comparable sites, although other excavations along the CTRL are likely to provide a wealth of comparable material.

Potential for further work

- 7.1.7 Full analysis on these samples is unlikely to provide more information on the nature of their composition than was ascertained at the assessment. Nevertheless, a full discussion of the charcoal from these cremation deposits will allow valuable comparisons to be made with other sites, both regionally and nationally. Therefore, it is important that the results are included in any future publication.

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Table 12: Summary of charcoal from cremations

Sample details					Flot details		
Pit	Context	Period	Sample no.	Sample size	Flot size (ml)	Charcoal	Taxa
39	39	AD 70-200	1	1 litre	5	++	<i>Quercus</i> sp. Maloideae
	40	AD 70-200	2	1.1 kg	18.5	+++	<i>Quercus</i> sp.
43	45	LIA-AD 70	3	1 litre	3	+	<i>Quercus</i> sp.
	44	AD 70-200	4	7 litres	40	++	<i>Quercus</i> sp.

+ = 1-10; ++ = 11-50; +++ = 51-100

APPENDIX 8 - SHELL

8.1 Assessment of the Shell

by Jessica M. Winder

A single fragment of shell of the common flat oyster *Ostrea edulis* L. was recovered from Boys Hall Balancing Pond excavations (Table 13). It offers no potential for further work in pursuit of the research aims of the CTRL project, and need not be retained.

Table 13: summary of oysters

Context number	Left valve (LV) oyster	Unmeasurable LV oyster	Right valve (RV) oyster	Unmeasurable RV oyster	Total valves oyster (P = present)	Comments on oysters
37182					P	1 small fragment