

CHAPTER 3

THE CEMETERY: FEATURES AND LAYOUT

INTRODUCTION

In most reports on archaeological excavations it is the structural narrative that rightly takes the leading role, as it is the stratigraphic relationships of the features and their interaction within the landscape that provides the framework within and around which other categories of evidence must be viewed. As will have become apparent from Chapter 2, this cannot be the case for the 1966–1967 excavations in the Brougham cemetery. The structural records are, understandably, the weakest part of the archive and other elements such as the pottery and the human bones frequently provide a much richer source of information about features. For this reason, the structural information is only outlined in this chapter. A better understanding will be gained in Chapter 11 where it is integrated with the other data.

THE POSITION OF THE CEMETERY WITHIN THE LANDSCAPE

The distribution of the features and burials found during 1967 is shown in FIG. 3.1, and the key to the detailed site plans on FIG. 3.2. To fully comprehend the possible lay-out of the cemetery it is also necessary to consider the topography of the area and where the different seasons of excavation were concentrated. FIGURE 3.3 shows a reconstruction of the elevation of the site. The west–east elevation is taken through the centre of the excavation, approximately on the line of the centre of the carriageway of the new road. The north–south elevation runs through **F40** which is believed to have been a large funerary monument. These elevations have been reconstructed from the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map showing the contours of the land prior to the roadworks. In FIG. 3.4 the site plan is shown schematically (see p. 14) coded according to the different periods of excavation. As can be seen the first 1967 season concentrated on the central part of the new carriageway. The second 1967 season concentrated predominantly on the northern margin of the site but also explored the eastern part of the site.

The cemetery is situated on a low eminence to the east of the fort and *vicus* (see FIG. 1.1). These latter lie at a height of *c.* 113–14m above mean sea level, whereas the summit of the eminence is at *c.* 124m. Though the difference in relief is relatively slight, the area on which the cemetery is situated is the nearest higher land to the fort and *vicus* and would have formed the skyline in that direction for people living there. As can be seen from FIG. 3.3, the slope is gentle to the north and west, slightly steeper to the east and steepest to the south.

The road building provided an opportunity to observe the area between the river and the cemetery area. It was noted that a large area of occupation debris stretched from the bank of the river to the foot of the hill (Pacitto unpublished). If the ‘foot of the hill’ is taken literally then this occupation spread at least 150m to the west of the most westerly feature recorded in the cemetery (**F39**). This was a trench approximately 3m long containing the bases of three slabs of dressed stone which had been broken off just below the base of the topsoil. It was

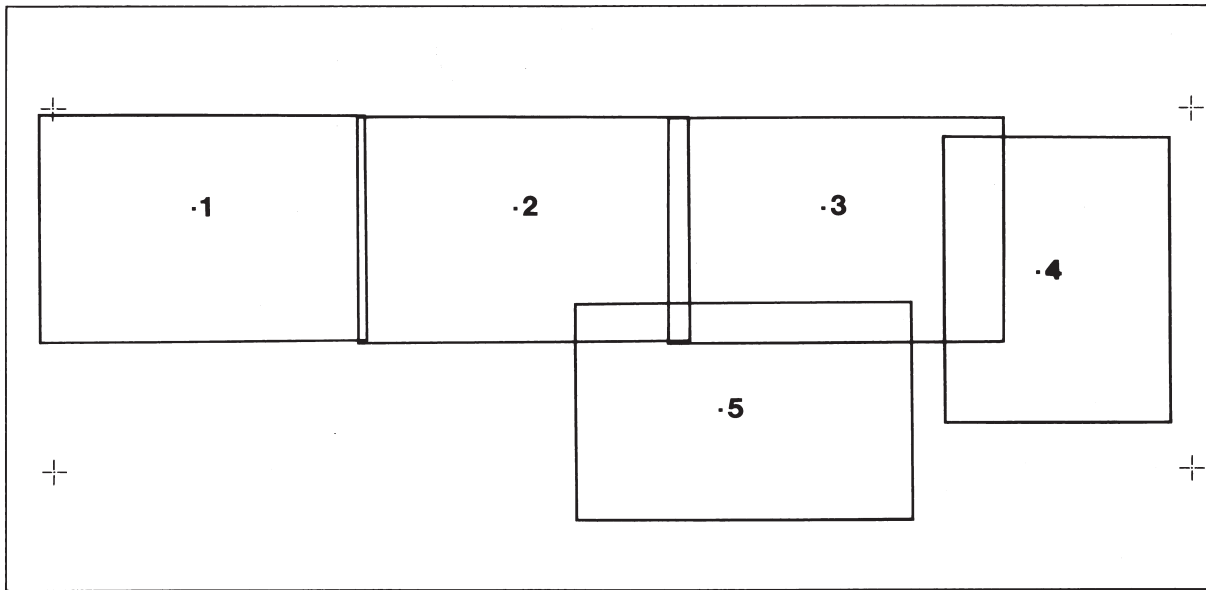


FIG. 3.2 Key to detailed site plans (FIGS 4.2, 4.93, 4.149, 4.237 and 4.243).

noted that no burials of any sort occurred for some considerable distance around the stones. The nearest (2) is just over 4m to the east. Another row of dressed stones (F32) was recorded approximately 53m to the west. It is probable that these were some form of flagstones rather than vertical slabs such as those at F39. No other feature was noted between F32 and F39. It should be noted that these westerly features lie in the northern part of the site which was excavated in more controlled circumstances in the second 1967 season (see FIG. 3.4). If the cemetery had extended beyond F39 to the west in this part of the site, it is to be expected that such deposits would have been located and excavated, or at least recorded. As they were not, it seems reasonable to conclude that the western boundary of the cemetery in the northern part of the site may have been in the vicinity of F39 and that, as the excavators suggested, the dressed stones may have been some sort of boundary marker. If this is correct it would be the top of the hill that was marked off for the cemetery.

It is always possible that further south the cemetery extended further to the west. Currently the most westerly burials (43 and 44) are some 26m to the east of the line of F39, but it must be remembered that it is the centre of the carriageway that probably saw the most destruction when the roadworks started unexpectedly early. Ominously the first two numbered graves in the 1967 season (82 1967/1 and 81 1967/2) lie somewhat to the east of 43 and 44. There is, therefore no way of knowing how far to the west the southern part of the cemetery extended. The Roman practice of requiring a clear demarcation between the living and dead, however, would make a boundary at or not far to the west of F39 likely, given the occupation noted at the foot of the hill.

FIGURE 3.1 shows that the excavated features lie overwhelmingly in the northern half of the site with their southern margin lying approximately along the line of the centre of the carriageway of the new road. A few isolated burials and other deposits were found to the south in both 1966 and 1967 (301–304, 307, 308, F28 and F33). The southern part is relatively devoid of features despite trial trenching being undertaken in 1966 (trenches 4, 5, 10 and 11), and the area being investigated again in 1967. It may be assumed that the Roman road ran along this barren strip though there is no direct evidence of this. The excavators in 1967 (Pacitto unpublished) were of this opinion. Though they found no trace of road metalling, they believed that it must have been removed either by ploughing or the road building works. Recent geophysical work would suggest that this supposition is correct as it has confirmed that the Roman road from the east runs along the same path as the modern A66 which has now obliterated the site (Blair Gormley pers. comm.). Even allowing for the fact that much of the southern part of the site was occupied by the Roman road, the number of burials to the

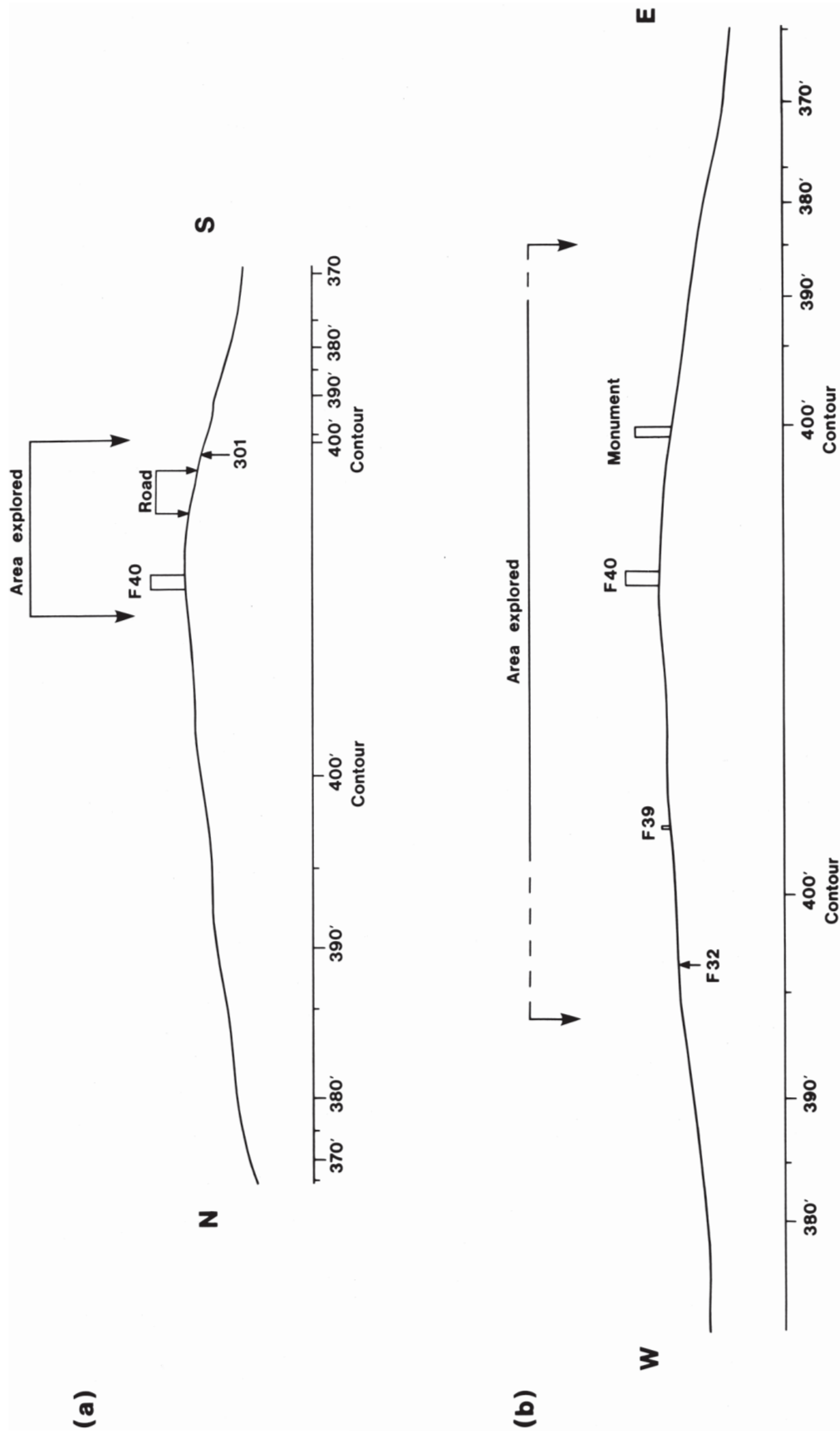


FIG. 3.3 Elevation of cemetery area prior to roadworks; vertical scale 1:1250, horizontal scale 1:2500.

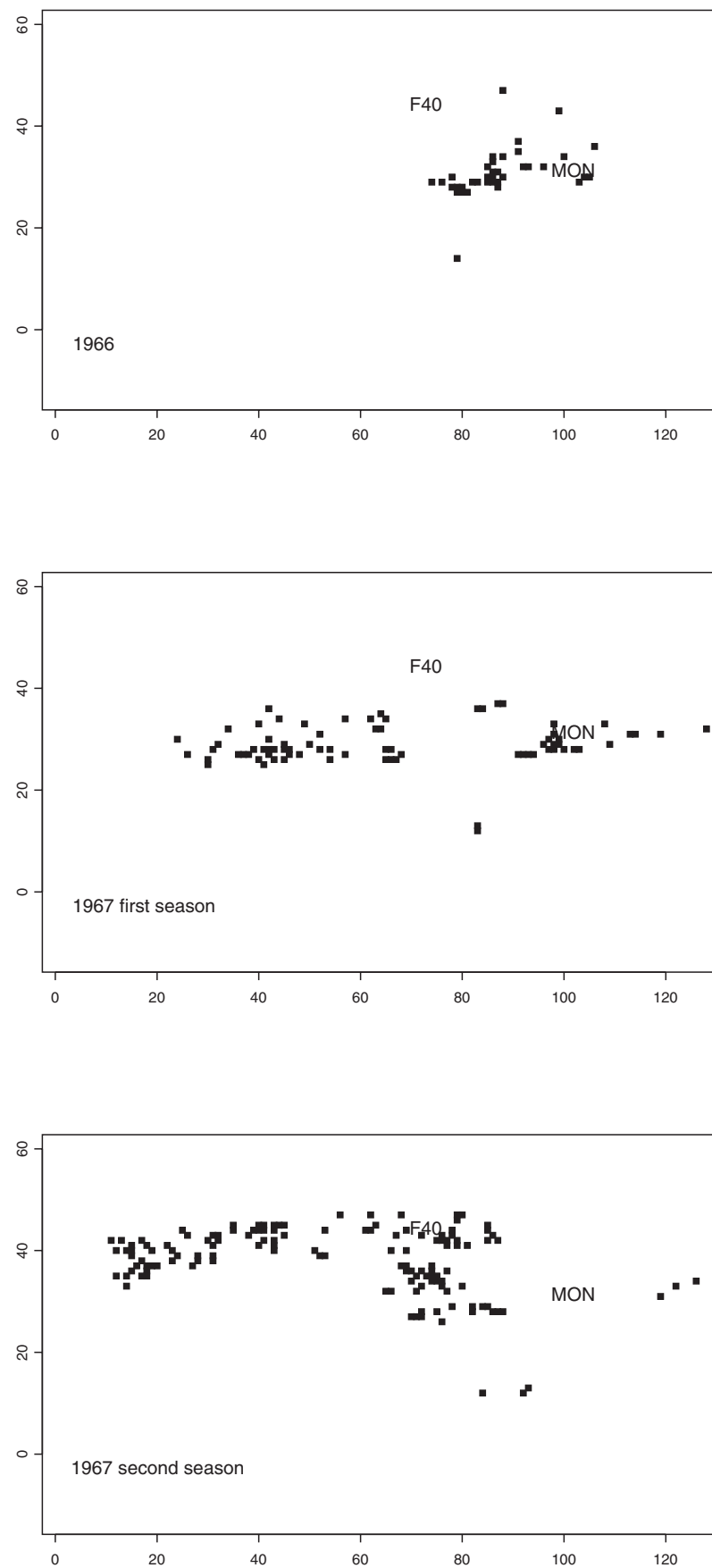


FIG. 3.4 Schematic plans showing different campaigns of excavation.

south of its presumed southern margin is very small, which might suggest that the main focus of the cemetery was to the north of the road. As can be seen from FIG. 3.3 the ground is falling away more steeply south of the road, and it is possible that this may have made this area a less favoured location for burials.

The density of recorded features diminishes to the east as can be seen in FIG. 3.1. This appears to be a true reflection of the intensity of activity rather than the result of the difficult circumstances of the 1967 excavations. In 1966 trial trenches 8 to 12 were laid out and virtually nothing was recorded in them. The drainage ditch along the southern part of the carriageway observed by Mr Priestman (see p. 11) also produced very little evidence of funerary activity. From the Lightwater culvert (NGR NY 549290) to the brow of the hill (c. 500m to the east of the hilltop), he encountered only one burial at a point c. 225m to the east of the old wall line that crossed the eastern part of the site. As discussed in Chapter 1 (see p. 4), there are antiquarian records of tombstones being seen in a wall by the Countess' Pillar and in a field close to it but on the other side of the road. The pillar lies slightly to the south and about 20m beyond the most westerly feature recorded (300). These records might suggest a continuation of the cemetery in that direction. The stone recorded in a wall, however, had clearly been moved and it is possible that the field described could have lain within the area of the excavation. It is noticeable that the recorded features do become more sparse east of the 400' (121.92m) contour where the ground starts to fall away slightly more steeply. Again it could be that the lower ground was a less favoured location, and that the cemetery did not extend much further to the east than the excavated features.

The northern extent of the cemetery can best be judged by examining the distribution of the features recorded during the second 1967 season, as in the north-west part of the site trench boundaries are marked on the plan which make it explicit which part of the site had been examined. Here several deposits lie very close to the northern edge of the trench and in one case (30) beyond it, so it seems very likely that the cemetery extended further to the north.

To sum up, it seems probable that the cemetery lay predominantly to the north of the road running from Brougham to Old Penrith. It is likely that the excavations encompassed most of its west-east extent, though burials are likely to have been lost in the south-west part, immediately north of the Roman road. It is also probable that it extended to the north. If, as seems possible, the land at the top of the eminence within the 400' contour was the preferred burial area, then there would be scope for the cemetery to have extended back in a north-westerly direction for another 200m or so along the hilltop. As will be described in the next section, the cemetery contained major funerary monuments. Many of the other graves must also have been marked either by the tombstones with which Brougham is so richly provided or in some other way. This cemetery would have been a major feature in the Brougham landscape. People in the fort and *vicus* could look up and see it on the skyline. Travellers approaching from the east along the major cross-Pennine road would see the cemetery before they saw Brougham. To anyone living in, or visiting Brougham in the third century, the cemetery would have been a significant feature in the landscape and full of the sorts of monuments and memorials that were to be expected within the Roman world.

THE LAYOUT OF THE CEMETERY

Relatively few features other than those thought to be burials were excavated during 1967 for reasons connected with the time pressures the excavators were working under. Generally once it had been established that a feature was not a burial, excavation ceased. Linear features were, however, recorded and planned in part even if they were not fully excavated. Had there been any regular divisions within the cemetery, or well-marked boundaries it could be expected that they would have been recorded. It is probable, however, that shallow features were removed in the preliminary machining as this was not done under controlled

circumstances in 1967. The only features recorded that could have acted as boundaries or internal divisions were two alignments of vertically set sandstone slabs (**F39** and **F42**) and two gullies or ditches (**F47** and **F36**)

A similar feature to the possible boundary marker **F39** may have been recorded as **F42** running east–west (FIG. 3.5). It consisted of three sandstone slabs set vertically, each being approximately 1m wide. Two were end to end and the third placed alongside the western end, other stones are described as having been placed to support these slabs. The records do not note whether or not the slabs were dressed but one is described as having a roughly chamfered end, and a photograph suggests they may have been. The feature was not understood at the time it was observed as it had been uncovered whilst machining, and the area around it was disturbed. It was noted that, as with **F39**, there were no burials in the immediate vicinity, though unlike that feature these stones were erected in the middle of the cemetery area.

Towards the eastern margin of the site, a linear feature running approximately 12m north–south was recorded (**F47**), terminating at the northern end in an oval pit whose eastern margin was not well defined (4.2 x c. 6m). A section was cut but there are no records of whether this was placed across the linear feature or the pit. The section was described as being 0.305m deep with gradually sloping sides. The fill of the entire feature was described as very black with ‘all sorts of occupation material’ within it. The cremation book record notes that bones, nails, bronze fragments and sherds were recovered from it, but all that now survives in the archive are two fragments of Central Gaulish samian of late-Antonine date, one of East Gaulish samian of the late second or third century and a fragment of iron. The range of recorded finds and the description of the fill as being very black suggest that this feature was likely to have been filled with redeposited pyre debris. This suggests the feature was open for at least part of the time the cemetery was active and it *might* have functioned as some form of eastern boundary though three funerary related features (**298–300**) were found to the east.

Part of a more substantial linear feature was recorded as **F36**. This was described as a shallow sloping-sided trench (c. 2.75m wide). Only the northern terminal was excavated for a length of c. 3.12m, but it continued beyond the planned extent. At the point where excavation ceased the feature was c. 1m deep. There is no description of the fill and the only finds recorded were pottery sherds. These range in date from Antonine samian to a rimsherd of a Crambeck type 1 developed beaded-and-flanged bowl that may be dated to the period c. A.D. 285–400. This would suggest that material was still accumulating in this feature during the late third century or later, though it should be noted that at its northern terminal it was cut by two urned burials that suggest that this end may have been filled earlier, as **72** can be attributed to Phase 1 and **78** to Phase 2. Though the records of the fill are sparse, there are hints that it may have included redeposited pyre debris as some of the pottery sherds are burnt.

None of the burials, either individually or as groups, appear to have been enclosed within any ditches or gullies. A short length of a curved ditch (**F24**) c. 0.46m wide and 0.3m deep was encountered very early in the first 1967 season. It may have divided **104** from **105** and **106**, but the records are very limited and no date can be attributed to it. The fill is described as being of dark earth with some fragments of cremated bone. This would suggest that it included redeposited pyre debris and that the ditch was a cemetery feature.

Features into which burials had been dug were excavated as **F37** and **F38**. **F38** was an approximately circular shallow scoop (4.57m north–south and 4.19m west–east). The pottery assemblage suggests it may have been filled during Phase 1. The lower levels were recorded as having considerable areas of burning with concentrations of charcoal and burnt pottery. This is strongly suggestive of redeposited pyre debris but it is not clear whether it implies any *in situ* burning. The excavators clearly considered the possibility that the feature was associated with the actual cremation process, but believed that it was more likely to have been dug to receive what they described as refuse from the process. In these circumstances it seems probable that had *in situ* burning been observed on the sides or base, it would have been noted.



FIG. 3.5 **F42** looking north-west; scale in feet.

The fill of the other feature (**F37**) appears contemporary with the earliest use of the cemetery from its pottery assemblage. It was a rectangular pit with a flat base and steeply sloping sides (4.34m long by 1.83m). Unlike many of the other recorded features, there is no hint either from the fill description or the finds that this pit contained redeposited pyre debris.

Cobbled surfaces were found intermittently in both the 1966 and 1967 seasons. Mr Pacitto noted that cobbling was found in both of the 1967 seasons and that sometimes more than one layer was found (Pacitto unpublished). This cobbling never sealed a grave but in several instances graves were cut through cobbled surfaces. No obvious pattern could be discerned but he was of the opinion that much had probably been destroyed by ploughing or the stripping operations prior to the road-building programme.

The most extensive area for which records survive lay along the southern edge of the 1966 Trench 2. During 1967 it was probably also this cobbling which was observed at **F35**. In addition cobbled patches were noted at **F23** and **F30** suggesting that this band of cobbling extended to the west. To the south cobbling was observed in 1966 Trench 5, and in the 1967 features **F28** and **F33**. The plans of all three areas indicate the southern extent of the cobbling. If these southern patches are part of the same cobbled spread they would indicate a width of c. 29m judged from the southern extent in **F33**, though in **F28** the cobbling is clearly not extending so far south. It is open to question however whether these observations do represent a continuous spread, as in 1966 Trench 3 the cobbling is explicitly stated to be absent. The records are silent as to whether cobbling was observed in 1966 Trench 4. The only detailed record of the cobbling occurs in relation to that in **F28** and **F30**. The former are referred to as small close-set cobbles with smooth surfaces, and the **F30** cobbling was described as 'neat'. In the case of **F28** it was noted that they lay directly on the subsoil.

The 1966 site plan clearly shows **243** and **244** lying within the cobbled area in Trench 2 but all of the other burials in the area dug that year are shown to the north of the cobbling apparently respecting it. During the second season of 1967 another burial (**236**) was found just on or to the north of the cobbled surface. The records for this burial are good, and make no mention of any cobbling in the vicinity, which might suggest it lay just to the north of the surface. Given the absence of any detailed written records for the 1966 season, though, the possibility that the surface had been removed during excavation cannot be ruled out.

F23 marks where the cobbled surface was cut by the Phase 2 burial **105** indicating it was in existence by the mid third century. Assuming that the planned position of **243** and **244** indicates that they too were cut through the cobbling this might suggest that the cobbling here was in place by the beginning of the third century as both of these deposits belong to Period 1. At **F28** the cobbled surface was overlain by a dark sooty earth. The pottery recovered from this again suggests that the cobbles were an early feature as the date range suggests accumulation throughout the life of the cemetery. It included nine fragments of Central Gaulish samian of Antonine date, and four bodysherds in fabrics R01 and R07 with acute lattice indicative of a Hadrianic to Antonine date. Two fragments of East Gaulish samian, a scrap of a Trier Rhenish beaker (fabric F01), a rim fragment of a BB1 incipient beaded-and-flanged bowl (*cf.* Gillam 1976, 72, nos 43–4), a fragment from a bifid-rimmed constricted-necked jar with a frilled cordon in fabric O03 and a body fragment with obtuse lattice in fabric R01 are indicative of accumulation during the first two-thirds of the third century. A BB1 jar with an everted rim probably of greater diameter than maximum girth can be dated to the period A.D. 270–330.

It is tempting to see at least some of this cobbling as being part of the road that may have formed the southern boundary of the cemetery, though it is clear that neither Miss Charlesworth nor Mr Pacitto regarded it in this light. The description of the cobbles in **F28** being covered by deposits containing redeposited pyre debris suggests a deposit relatively undisturbed either by ploughing or the machining associated with the civil engineering works. In these circumstances, the description of a cobble surface lying directly on the subsoil suggests a less substantial surface than might be expected with a road. Instead it seems likely that at least some parts of the cemetery were provided with cobbled surfaces.

It is possible that this cobbling may have been associated with marking out the positions of the graves and other deposits. It is clear from the lack of intercut deposits that they must have been marked on the surface in some way. Clearly from the number of tombstones found at Brougham, inscribed stone memorials would have been one type of marker. Little evidence for their placement in the cemetery was found, though **F45** found in the midst of a group of graves in the north-west of the site may have been the foundation trench for one. It was a narrow linear feature with flattish bottom and sloping sides (3.2m by 0.53m wide with a base 0.3m below the top of natural). Wooden posts might also have been used, which might explain the two possible post-holes (**F25** and **F26**) found in the cobbled area **F23**.

It is possible that the natural features of the hilltop might also have been used. In several cases (**208**, **236** and **271**) urned burials are recorded immediately adjacent to large erratic boulders, as were some pits with redeposited pyre debris (**216**, **217**, **230** and **261**). The possibility that these may have been painted to act as markers should not be excluded.

THE MASONRY MONUMENTS

By A.P. Fitzpatrick

The remains of two funerary monuments were recorded during the excavations.

The first, referred to as the Monument, was probably a monumental tower. It lies at the eastern edge of the site (FIG. 3.1, detailed location plan FIG. 4.149). The square foundations of this were first observed, albeit in part only, by Mr R. Hogg, then Curator of Carlisle Museum, and Mrs Bagot in September 1958 in the contractor's excavation of the hole for the south-western footing of an electricity pylon. It was during this work that the sculpted human head (**SS4**, FIG. 10.21) and the urned cremation burial catalogued here as **349** were discovered. The foundations were completely exposed during the course of the excavations reported here when they were photographed (FIG. 3.6), but it was not possible to plan them.

The foundation seems to have been c. 3 x 3m square. The eastern side had been disturbed in the digging of the hole for the pylon and the north-eastern corner stone was missing. The south side had been robbed entirely and because of this the proportions and dimensions of the structure are not known with certainty. However, the proportions of comparable

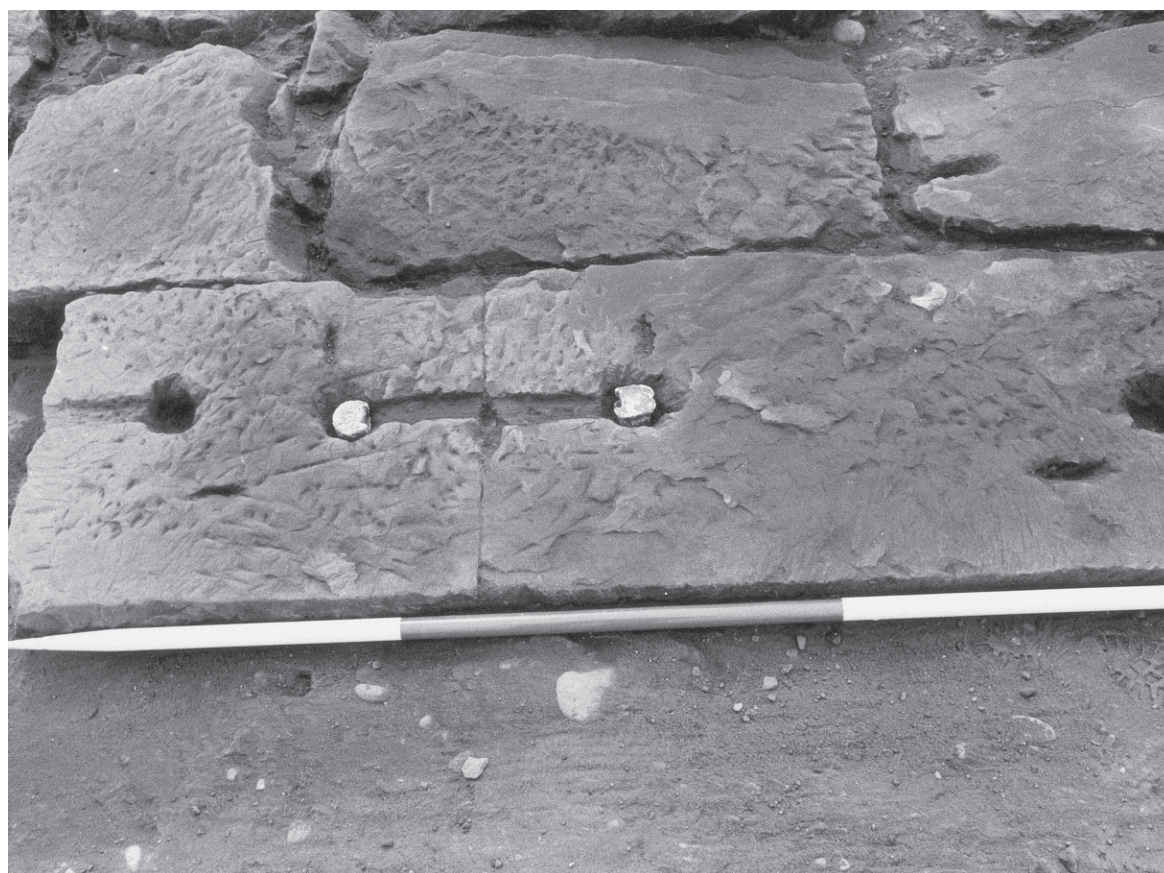


FIG. 3.6 The Monument. Above, viewed from the north; scale 2m. Below, detail of clamp sockets on the north side of the monument; scale in 0.5m divisions.

structures seem to have been square and so it seems likely that the Brougham Monument was square also.

The stones that survived in the north side had sockets that probably held iron clamps. No clamps survived *in situ* but two pieces of lead, apparently used to help fix the clamps, were found, and they were positioned for photography (FIG. 3.6 lower view).

The upper surfaces of the stones that formed the outer edge of the Monument were finely dressed in contrast to those in the centre, which were not dressed. This was interpreted as indicating that the Monument was hollow, or more likely, had a rubble core. The photographs also show holes that are likely to have been for dowel and/or lewis holes (*cf.* Bidwell and Holbrook 1989, 129), or possibly holes to take the tip of a crowbar used to lever blocks into position (Hill *et al.* 1980, 186–8). The interpretation of these features is not entirely sure, but it is clear that they show that the structure was jointed both horizontally and very probably vertically. Similar features are known from the monumental tombs of Gallia Belgica (e.g. von Massow 1932, 71, Abb. 45) which it is suggested below that the Brougham example resembled. The dressing of the outer stones could have been to ensure a precise fit between the pre-prepared stones as much as for appearances.

The notes of Mr Hogg suggest that the Monument was surrounded by placed and packed gravel (*in litt.* to Miss Charlesworth, 5.8.1966), but this was not recognised in the course of the subsequent rescue excavations.

During these rescue excavations a considerable number of cremation burials were recorded from the vicinity of the foundations and although no positive evidence for the Monument having been a funerary monument was recovered, these burials, the parallels of the foundations to those of known funerary monuments, and the discovery of the sculpted head strongly support the suggestion that it was one.

The variety of Roman funerary monuments in the north-western provinces was reviewed by Gabelmann (1972; see also Hatt 1951, 176–82) and it appears that with the exception of tower monuments, which are considered below, second and third-century monumental tombs or funerary monuments are rare not only in Britain (Jessup 1959; Gillam and Daniels 1961, 60–1; Toynbee 1971, 92–4, fig. 6, 181–2; Blagg and Hunn 1984), but also in other north-western areas of the Empire (e.g. Galliou 1989, 50, 77). The other types of monument to which the foundations at Brougham could belong are square-walled tomb chambers or a burial chamber, perhaps within a tumulus.

Square-walled stone tomb chambers are quite common in the northern Roman provinces (e.g. Kempton: Mackensen 1978, 127–32, 269, 276, 296–7, Beil. 4, 2–4; Faber 1998, 158–66). Although they occur rarely in south-east Britain (e.g. Jessup 1959; Black 1986, 206–10) they are more common further north, with similar monuments known at Vindolanda (Birley 1977, 67), and Derby, where five are known (Wheeler 1985, 222–7, 248–50, figs 98–100, pls 16–17). With the exception of two of the Derby monuments (nos 2 and 5), these finds are usually hollow. Although having solid platforms, 2.5m square and 2.2 x 2.6m respectively, monuments 2 and 5 at Derby both overlay pits and the solid platforms were made from small gritstone rubble, which distinguishes them from the finely worked Brougham Monument. Neither of the two pits at Derby contained human remains. The five monuments at Derby are later first or second century in date and lined a roadside as was commonly the case in the Roman world (e.g. von Hesberg and Zanker 1987; Roth Congès 1990; Faber 1998; Müller 1999, 72–5, Abb. 3, 8, Beil. 1).

Jessup suggested that the related but larger, hollow, square foundation in the walled cemetery at Langley, Kent (c. 4 x 4m) supported a tower nearly 7m high (1959, 15). The solid foundation of the Brougham Monument may suggest that it was of a slightly different type and was at least as high, if not slightly higher. It should be noted that while commonly shown as hollow (e.g. Collingwood and Richmond 1969, 169, fig. 55, b), the High Rochester monuments may have had a rubble core and been not dissimilar in appearance to the Brougham example.

The possibility that the foundation was for a burial chamber, perhaps within a tumulus as is known at Christnach, Luxembourg (Wigg 1993, 49, Abb. 15b, Taf. 7) cannot be excluded,

but the use of joints at Brougham suggests that the structure rose to some height, which is unlikely to have been the case within a tumulus.

Although it is possible that the square base at Brougham supported a round superstructure (e.g. Toynbee 1971, 126, pl. 39; Frenz 1985), most square bases were surmounted by square-based pillar/tower monuments with roughly pyramidal roofs of a type best represented by the Igel column near Trier.

Tower monuments are widely distributed in the Roman Empire but the type was particularly popular in the eastern part of Gallia Belgica (van Doorselear 1967, 169). A few examples are known from Britain, all associated with towns, at London, Silchester and Verulamium (Blagg and Hunn 1984, 363). The type has first-century origins (Gabelmann 1973; 1987) but most of the examples from Gallia Belgica belong to the second and earlier third century, with the Igel monument being amongst the latest presently known (von Massow 1932; Gabelmann 1987, 303, 306; Numrich 1997, 26, 133; Wightman 1971, 150; 1985, 175–6; Drinkwater 1978; Toynbee 1971, 164–76). One of the best parallels for the jointed clamps of the Brougham foundation is the Michelsbüsch monument whose superstructure was decorated with finely worked reliefs that have been dated to the first half of the third century (Krüger 1923).

The size of these monuments varied greatly. The Igel column still stands c. 30m high and it may be that the Brougham foundations supported a more modest example. The 'Krufter Säule' from Kruft, Bonn, dated to the early second century was approximately 3m square at the base and has been tentatively reconstructed as having been c. 8m high (Gabelmann 1973, Bld. 40, 4). The Brougham example may have been of similar height and decorated with sculptures and reliefs such as decorated stone SS2 (FIG. 10.20).

The Brougham Monument was built near the crest of the hill, with the skyline perhaps being used to emphasise its monumentality. It is likely that it was painted in bright colours.

The second monumental structure was represented by what was probably originally a circular foundation (F40). It lies in the north-eastern part of the excavated area (FIG. 3.1, detailed location plan FIG. 4.93; FIGS 3.7, 3.8).

This was composed of a semicircle of dressed red and purple sandstone blocks, 4.5m across, with a large plinth-like stone in the middle. There were two dressed blocks to the east and south and on the west two large glacial erratic boulders and smaller debris. As these covered burial 186, it is likely that these stones were tumble from the feature. A number of other burials seem to have been grouped around the feature (183–92). Deposit 187, found by Mr Dagg after the Ministry of Works excavations had finished, is not precisely located but stated to be 'near' this feature.

When this tumble was excavated the fill of the interstices was mainly a light-brown sandy soil with large pebbles lower down. No burials were recovered inside the semicircle. When the plinth was removed it proved to be decorated with a finely sculpted hippocamp (SS2, FIG. 10.20). Not mentioned in the recording of the feature, but clearly attributed to F40 in the finds registers, are six fragments of carved purple sandstone and a 'leg' carved from purple sandstone. These stones are all now lost. It is thought likely that the decorated stones derived from the superstructure of the monument, though it is possible that the stone decorated with the hippocamp (SS2) was reused as a footing. The other decorated stones could also have been reused from an earlier monument.

Seven sherds of BB1 including a rimsherd with strongly everted rim dating to c. A.D. 270–330 were associated with the feature as well as some pieces of cremated bone, fragments of bronze and some iron nails. Medieval pottery was also found, and stone from the monument, and perhaps the burial too, may have been robbed or destroyed during that period.

It is likely the feature was originally circular, c. 5m in diameter. Some foundation stones were glacial erratics whose external surfaces had been finely dressed. The decorated stones suggest that the structure may have been adorned with reliefs or other decorative sculpture. The hippocamp would be appropriate to a water deity connected with the idea of the journey to the Isles of the Blessed.

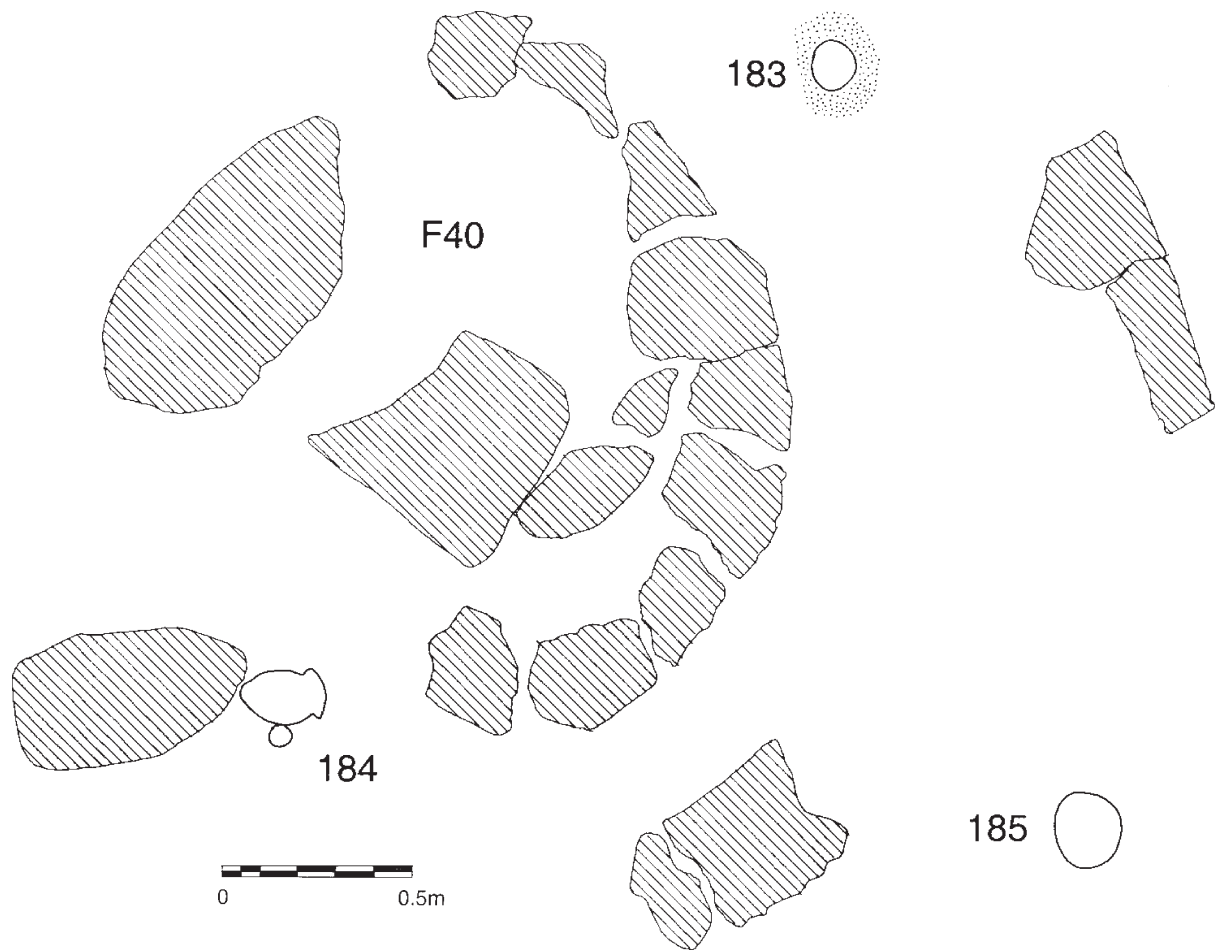


FIG. 3.7 Plan of F40.

The monument, which could have been up to 8m high, may have originally surmounted a cremation burial but the finds could also derive from one of the other nearby burials covered and perhaps disturbed in the collapse and/or robbing of the monument.

Although not uncommon in continental Europe (e.g. Kempten: Mackensen 1978, 210, Taf. 198, 1–3, 199, 2, Beil. 4,1), funerary monuments with circular foundations are not well known in Roman Britain (Wigg 1993), although they are better represented than ones with square foundations.

The best parallel for the Brougham find comes from High Rochester where a monument of a similar size was associated with three square-based examples (see above), and also some earthen barrows of a type found in the much larger barrow cemetery immediately to the west. All lay beside Dere Street and comprised a small roadside cemetery of a well-known type. The circular monument at High Rochester contained an urned cremation burial, a fragment of a glass *unguentarium* and a coin of Severus Alexander, suggesting that the burial is likely to be of third-century date. The earth is described as having been reddened by fire. Two offset courses of the tomb resting on a rubble plinth still survive, and there is a simple, worn relief of an animal head on the face of one stone (Bosanquet 1935; Richmond 1940, 104–5, fig. 25–6; Charlton and Mitcheson 1984, 1, 21, pl. ia; Jessup 1959, 3–4).

Although Toynbee was confident that these structures were the foundations and retaining courses for earthen barrows (1971, 182), this is not certain. Richmond described the wall as resting on a plinth of rubble (1940, 105) and it is clear that a variety of monuments could have surmounted circular bases (Wigg 1993; 1998). It remains possible that a round masonry monument, now robbed out, surmounted the circular foundation. Remains of what appear to be very similar tombs are visible on air photographs of Chesters (Selkirk 1983, figs on p. 151).



FIG. 3.8 F40 looking north with 184 to the south-east; scale in feet.

There are a few comparable monuments from southern Britain. One is also within the walled cemetery at Langley, Kent, and is of similar size, *c.* 4m diameter, and also had offsets like those at High Rochester, but was decorated with painted plaster (Jessup 1959, 14, fig. 1; Toynbee 1971, 94, 182). The other is a circular foundation at Pulborough, Sussex (Martin 1859, 140–2; Toynbee 1971, 182). Circular mausolea are also known but these have square settings internally which distinguishes them from these monuments (Toynbee 1971, 22–3; Collingwood and Richmond 1969, 168–73, fig. 57–8; Philp *et al.* 1999, 45–7, figs 21–5).

The Brougham monument then, seems likely to belong to a distinctive type of circular tomb, which may prove to be widely distributed in northern Britain. Similar but perhaps more simple monuments are well known in large Roman cemeteries in continental Europe (e.g. Luxemburger Strasse, Köln: Gabelmann 1987, plan 5; Regensburg: von Schnurbein 1977, Beil. 2).

It is possible that there were further masonry monuments in the cemetery. Deposit 145 of Phase 2 was surmounted by a pile of sandstone rubble. It is likely that this was the remains of a cairn or barrow, if it was not a more complex monument. Eric Birley also drew attention to accounts of great quantities of ‘bonding tile’ and ‘dressed stones of nearly uniform size’ being found on the site of the cemetery in the nineteenth century (1932, 128–9). In view of the evidence for a small number of monumental tombs in the present excavations, the tile and dressed stone may plausibly be seen as deriving from other funerary monuments.

THE GRAVES AND OTHER FUNERARY-RELATED CUT FEATURES

The majority of the features recorded at Brougham were cut features containing funerary related deposits. Nothing is known about how these would have looked on the surface while the cemetery was in use. No surface features that might be indicative of cairns or barrows, such as were observed in the cemetery at Petty Knowes outside the fort at High Rochester (Charlton and Mitcheson 1984), have ever been recorded in this area of Brougham either in the antiquarian literature or by Mr Hogg in 1958 or Miss Charlesworth in 1966. The stripping of the surface prior to excavation in 1967 would probably have obliterated any traces of such

features. As already noted, one pit excavated then did, however, have what was described as a tumble of sandstone above it which was removed before it was excavated (**145**, Phase 2). It has to be assumed that had any evidence of dressing been present on this sandstone, it would have been mentioned as the excavation records for the feature are comparatively good. It seems unlikely, therefore, that this was the remnants of a masonry monument of the type just discussed, and the possibility that it is the remains of a cairn of some form cannot be ruled out. Some hint that this grave may have been atypical is suggested by the inclusion of boulders in the corners and the fact that it contains what appears to be an unurned cremation burial. Elsewhere cobbles in graves are sometimes noted but generally as being used to wedge pottery vessels in place. The placing of boulders as in **145** is not otherwise noted.

It will be appreciated from the discussion in Chapter 2 that the records are very variable and it is not always possible to identify precisely what sort of feature was being excavated. It is possible, however, to recognise 292 features which appear either to have been graves or to have had redeposited pyre debris placed in them. Excluding the seven long cists of Phase 4, there are 164 pits, 68 cists and 53 features for which the records provide no description. Some of these last-mentioned features may perhaps have been more adequately described as spreads rather than as cut features (for example **87** and **249**), but all are planned and/or referred to in the records as if they were discrete entities. The nature of the pits, cists and long cists are summarised below, while more detailed descriptions are given in Chapter 4.

THE PITS

The pits for which measurements exist (129 examples) range in maximum size from 0.27m to 1.22m with a mean of 0.66m.¹ There are no obvious trends with time as the mean for each phase only varies from 0.64 to 0.66m. The majority (60%) are approximately circular or square with the dimensions differing by 0.1m or less. In the others one dimension is more pronounced but the orientation is only known in approximately half of these cases and so it would be unwise to draw any conclusions about preferred orientations. In some cases the profile of the pit is described but again little weight should be attached to the differences because of the extreme variability of the quality of the evidence.

Truncation by either earlier ploughing or by the preliminary stripping for the roadworks is sometimes noticeable in those pits with detailed records and it must be assumed that those of the first 1967 season were also likely to have suffered in this way. This problem with truncation makes it difficult to assess the significance of the six cases where the pits are described as having been covered by sandstone slabs which presumably acted as capping stones. Four of these could be dated to Phase 3 or 3b (**178**, **191**, **201** and **282**), one to Phase 2 (**259**) while the fifth (**196**) was unphased. This date distribution hints that the practice may have been a late one but it is impossible to ascertain how widespread it is likely to have been.

Two of the pits are described as having very thin black strips or layers around their edges. In the case of **236** (Phase 2) the excavator suggested this was the remains of a basketry lining by analogy with **227** (discussed below). He made no such suggestion for **149** (Phase 3) but noted that 'the outer edges were very black strips' other than on the south side where there was a sandstone slab. Though these may have been some form of localised tips of redeposited pyre debris, the use of the term 'strips' may perhaps hint that these too were some form of organic lining such as wooden planks. It was also suggested that a circular pattern of nails observed within the fill of **273** (Phase 1) was the remains of a 'tub-like' structure, but the drawn evidence does not suggest that it was a lining such as that proposed for **149** and **236**, and below (p. 394) it is argued that these nails could well represent the remains of a wooden box.

Some of the pits are described as having an isolated sandstone slab incorporated into one side (e.g. **157**, **166-7** and **283**). Given that some of the cists only had two or three walls lined with stone, there was obviously a continuum between pits with the occasional side lined with a slab and the full capped cists that also occur.

THE CISTS

Some form of cist made from slabs of sandstone was noted in 69 of the cut features.² Of these the records suggest that 25 were full cists with capping stones surviving in twelve cases (36, 53, 73, 93, 168, 186, 194, 264, 266, 281, 285 and 290). A further 23 appeared to be partial cists with slabs on only two or three sides. There is no evidence that the cists were ever provided with basal stones. In the other cases the nature of the cist is not described. The degree to which the slabs were dressed or cut to shape, if at all, is only noted in the case of 202 where dressed slabs are noted as part of a 'massive cist'. Unfortunately this was uncovered early in the first 1967 season and the records are very limited, so the nature of the deposit is uncertain. A photograph shows a square pit surrounded by a wide dressed kerb on three sides (FIG. 3.9). The possibility that this was some form of monument base cannot be ruled out. Certainly the depth of the blocks indicates that these are far more substantial than the slabs generally depicted forming cists in the drawn and photographic record.



FIG. 3.9 View of 202; scale in inches.

The nature of the excavations at Brougham makes a full exploration of the character of the cists discovered difficult. As noted in Chapter 2, it is clear that in the second season of 1967 features, once identified, were excavated in artificial boxes and there is reason to believe that once the cist was identified, the pit in which it was placed was not always fully defined. Measurements where they exist often seem to relate to the cist itself rather than the pit. In some cases it is clear that a cist was constructed within a larger pit (17, 47, 49, 53, 227, 253 and 310). In other cases the slabs of the cist appear to have lined the walls quite closely. The cists themselves are very similar in size to the pits discussed above with a mean maximum dimension of 0.68m (range 0.3m to 1.29m) and again there is very little significant variation with time. Just under half are more or less square, with the remainder (25 cases) being described as trapezoidal or rectangular.

In some cases the cist is clearly just one element of a complex structural deposit which allowed differential use of the space within the feature. The best example of this is 227 (Phase 2, FIG. 3.10) which consisted of a large pit apparently lined with basketry or some other form of organic lining which had been fixed to the pit walls by nails. Prior to this a sculptured stone had been placed into the pit wall as the records clearly show the lining running across the stone. Unfortunately the stone does not appear to survive in the archive and there is no description of it. A cist to contain the grave goods was built in the south-east corner of the pit but only after some pyre debris had been placed in the pit as the cist slabs are recorded as having been placed on top of this. A partial cist was also built in the south-west corner of the pit.



FIG. 3.10 View of **227**. Northern edge at right; scale in feet.

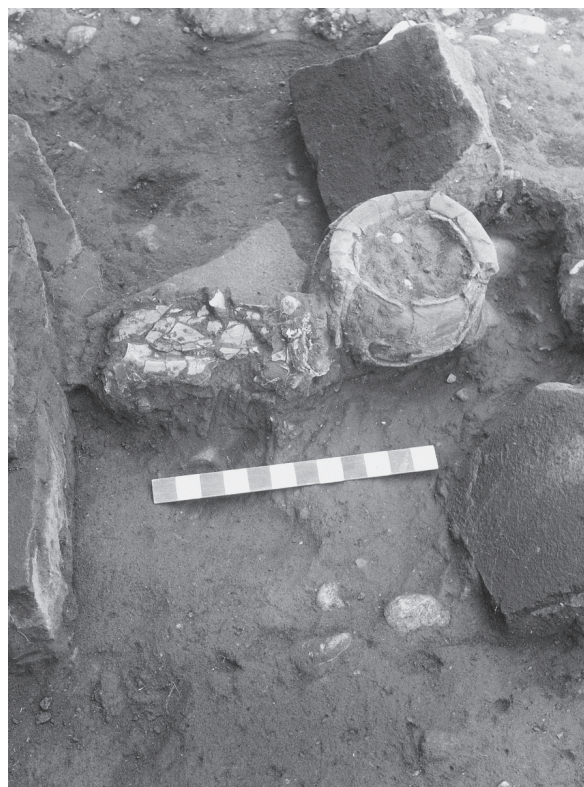


FIG. 3.11 View of **307** looking north; scale in inches.

Another complex cist arrangement was recorded in **307** (Phase 3b) (FIG. 3.11). This appeared to be two conjoined cists lacking the north and south walls. The northern element appeared to hold pyre debris and the southern the grave goods including an urned cremation. The cremated bones found in both parts came from the same individual and so clearly both elements were used at the same time. It is possible that the cists **302** and **303** may have come from a similar paired arrangement as they are described as adjoining. Unfortunately they were uncovered very early in the first 1967 season and are described as having been destroyed before recording. From their phasing they could be part of one contemporary deposit. Another feature where the deposit may have been divided into different compartments is **196**. This was found after the final cleaning of the site and had been damaged by the machining. As noted above it was a pit with a capping stone, but it also had a slab internally marking off one corner of the pit and a differentiated fill was noted with the corner area appearing to have a concentration of pyre debris. Unfortunately the feature was not fully defined or excavated, and so is poorly understood.

The division of the internal space apparent in the deposits so far discussed may be described as a horizontal division. However, there is also one very good example of a vertical division of space in **168** (FIG. 3.12). This cist was initially thought to be robbed which, as has been discussed (p. 15) was often the term used for deposits of what appears to be pyre debris. At a lower level, below a sandstone slab that must have fitted the internal space of the cist quite tightly, an urned cremation burial was recovered.

THE LONG CISTS

Seven long cists were recovered (**15**, **24**, **26**, **67–8**, **210** and **256**). The 1966 written records, such as they are, record one 'long grave' but the plan and the photographic record provide evidence of two different ones (**210** and **256**) and the presence of two long graves was explicitly



FIG. 3.12 View of **168** after upper fill of cist and sandstone slab removed. Urn with cremation *in situ* visible in base; scale in inches.

mentioned in the summary of the excavation published in the *Journal of Roman Studies* (Wilson 1967). An eighth may be represented by the smaller **25**.

The long cists were formed of sandstone slabs. In the cases of **24**, **25**, **67** and **68** these lined not only the sides but also the base of the pit, a feature that is never seen in the cists which are undoubtedly part of the cremation cemetery. In the case of four of the five examples excavated in 1967 (**24**, **26**, **67** and **68**) capping stones were still in place. In three cases (**15**, **67** and **68**) the slabs are noted to include fragments of inscribed Roman stones (FIG. 3.13). There are no precise measurements for the 1966 examples but the four complete 1967 examples (**15**, **26**, **67** and **68**) range in length from 1.81m to 2.06m, while the fifth (**24**) is cut by **26** and its full length is unknown. Two (**15** and **24**) are orientated north-west-south-east and the other three whose orientation is known (**26**, **67** and **68**) are orientated north-south. The records for the two excavated in 1966 are unsatisfactory but they too would appear to have been orientated north-south. Where there is a direct relationship, the north-south cist **26** is clearly later than the north-west-south-east cist **24**. It may be noted that the excavator of **68** believed that two long cists were present with the extant north-south cist being superimposed on an earlier north-west-south-east cist. The drawn evidence for this grave is very good and there is no evidence in the section for any earlier cist, and it might be suspected that the apparent north-west-south-east cist was fortuitous.

The written records generally refer to these cists as being empty as might be expected if they had been used for inhumations since unburnt bone does not survive well at Brougham. One (**67**) did contain traces of unburnt human bone but all of the other finds associated with long cists appear contemporary with the material from the rest of the cemetery. These finds, however, do not appear to be in what may be considered primary positions in the cists, and it seems more likely that they were residual. In **15** the finds were found in the fill between the cist slabs and the wall of the pit, while in **24** and **26** the material appeared to be on the capping stones and presumably were from the fill. Only in the case of **67** was any of the material actually found within the capped cist. These cists cannot be earlier than the cremation cemetery because the pottery associated with them is contemporary with that used with the cremation burials. The question has to be were they in use contemporaneously with the cremation rite or were they later?

The reuse of the tombstones in the Brougham cists may provide a clue to their date. As has already been discussed (p. 18), though Roman tombstones can be treated cavalierly within the Roman period, it might be debated whether it would have been thought appropriate in a



FIG. 3.13 View of 68 showing some of the inscribed stones forming the base.

well-managed cemetery, which Brougham appears to have been, for tombstones to have been smashed up for reuse while it was still functioning. Evidence from other sites might also suggest that the long cists were in use after the cremation cemetery. They appear to be very similar to ones found associated with Hadrian's Wall at such sites as Housesteads (Crow 1995, 96, pl. 62), Sewingshields (Crow and Jackson 1997) and Birdoswald (Wilmott 2001, pl. 60). None of these have produced any dating evidence. There has been some debate as to whether the Hadrian's Wall ones were of late Roman or sub-Roman date. Dark and Dark (1996, 58) have suggested that they should be viewed within a sub-Roman context while Crow and Jackson (1997, 66) prefer to place them within the Roman period. In the absence of any independent dating evidence, the arguments on neither side are particularly compelling, but both sides would be agreed in placing the long cists later than the third century. For this reason the long cists at Brougham have been assigned to Phase 4 which is assumed to have been in the fourth century or later. The circumstances in which the hilltop might have started to be used for burial again is considered further on p. 462.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CEMETERY

In FIG. 3.14 the deposits that can be closely dated have been schematically plotted. As can be seen the whole area north of the road appears to have been used from the outset and continued to be used throughout the century. The intensity with which different areas were used, however, did vary with time and a gradual drift to the east is noticeable.

As will become apparent when the material from the cemetery is discussed, the dating evidence from the cemetery is remarkably homogeneous. The conventional dating of the samian would allow the cemetery to start in the late second century but as Evans shows (p. 334) the coarse pottery deposited with these samian vessels is indicative of a start in the third century, possibly as late as the A.D. 220s. The pottery also indicates that the use of the area as a cremation cemetery ceased at the end of the third century and certainly does not appear to continue beyond c. A.D. 310 at the latest. The other categories of finds cannot provide as close dating as the pottery can, but where they can be dated they are consistent with the pottery evidence. For example, the glass vessels are, in the main, late second to mid third and third-century types. No fragments of the distinctive pale-green bubbly glass that comes into use

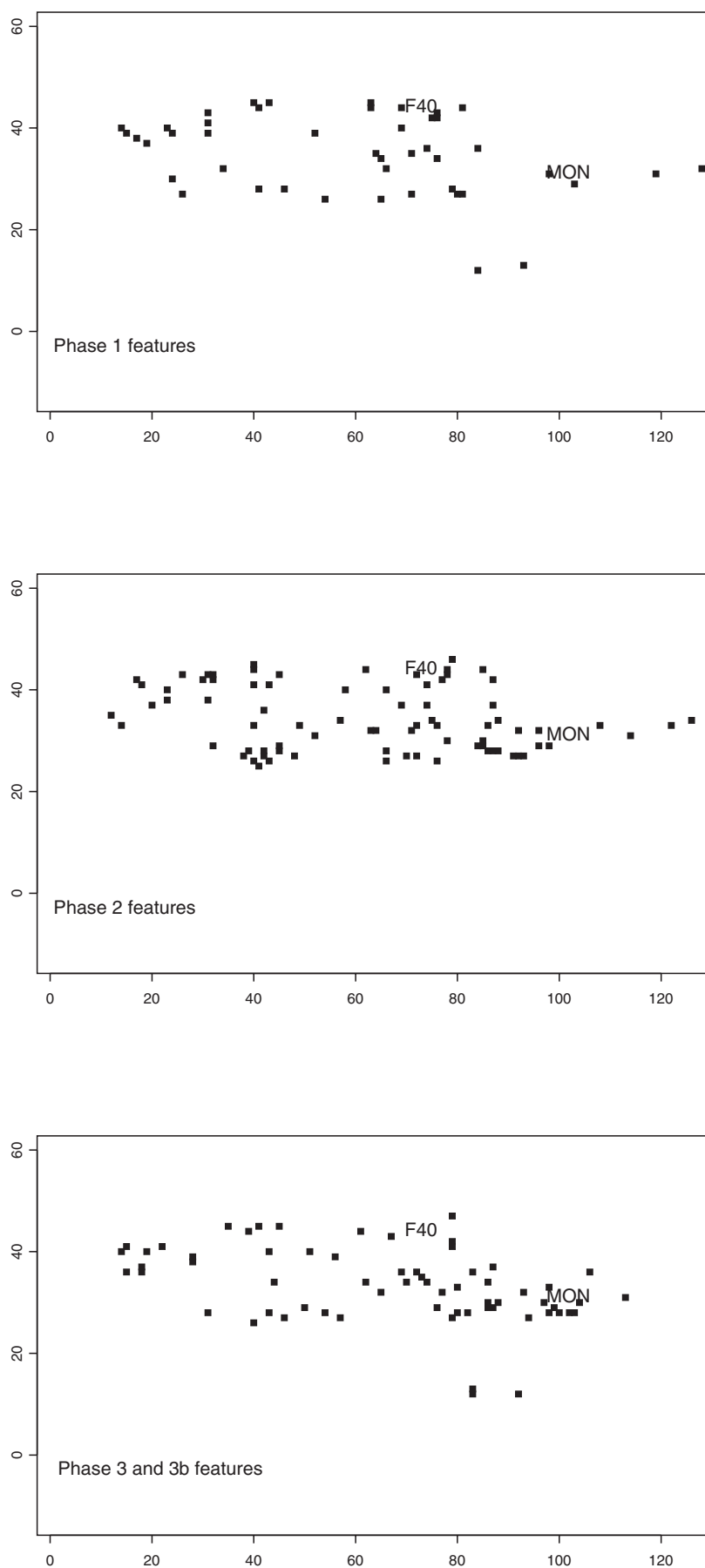


FIG. 3.14 Schematic plans showing development of the cemetery.

