

1.1 Humanly Modified Stone

By Ruth Shaffrey

1.1.1 The Fieldwork Event Aims which the assemblage can be expected to contribute to are as follows:

- Fieldwork Event Aim 1: To establish the origins and decline of the Roman settlement.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 2: To recover the plan and a dated occupation sequence for all phases of that section of the Roman settlement (including the rural-urban fringe and immediate hinterland) affected by the CTRL, to further the understanding of the extent and character of the core Roman settlement, its interaction with its immediate environs, and changes through time.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 3: To recover artefact assemblages (especially pottery) to elucidate the sequence of site development; provide information on trade and exchange within the local, regional and international economy, and the status and economy of the settlement.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 4: To determine the origins and decline of urban functions within the settlement.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 7: To establish the chronology of the cemetery.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 8: o establish the spatial development of the cemetery as far as possible within the area of investigation.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 9: To establish if spatial variations exist within the cemetery in relation to burial practice.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 11: To establish the nature and distribution of structural features located within the cemetery.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 12: To identify ancillary features associated with a specific burial practice.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 13: To establish the nature and date of occupation pre-dating the cemetery.
- Fieldwork Event Aim 14: To determine the nature of activity and land utilisation, other than that directly forming part of the cemetery, associated with the Roman town of Springhead.

Methodology

1.1.2 All retained stone was examined.

Quantification

1.1.3 Approximately 250 fragments of stone were retained from the excavations but the bulk of these were unworked gravel and pebbles. The material is summarised in Tables 2.5-2.8.

1.1.4 There were three possible whetstones from contexts 10275 (grave fill), 724 (cremation pit fill) and 882 (grave fill). These are discussed further in the comparative material section. Additionally, seven small fragments of lava were recovered from context 10018, which was a naturally filled pit. Although the lava fragments were very small and showed no evidence of use, lava rotary querns and millstones were commonly imported and it is likely, therefore, that these fragments are all that remain of what were originally querns. No burnt stone was recovered.

Provenance

- 1.1.5 With the exception of the fragments of the lava, which comes from the Rhineland, the utilised stone, (the Greensand and the Ironstone) are probably from local sources.

Conservation

- 1.1.6 There are no conservation requirements. All unworked stone could be discarded.

Comparative Material

- 1.1.7 The deposition of two potential whetstones in grave and cremation pits fills may be of some significance. Tools such as these are very rare in funerary contexts and as such are of interest; they generally occur in less than 1% of graves in a cemetery (Philpott 1991, 189). It has been suggested that domestic artefacts and tools placed in these contexts may be representative of the deceased's occupation or an activity with which they were often associated (Philpott 1991, 187;189). Although the deposition of whetstones in such contexts is unusual, there are other examples. At Bourn, Cambridgeshire, a whetstone was found in one of the Roman barrows and hones in another (Liversidge 1977, 24) while whetstones have also been found in funerary contexts at Winchester (Jones 1978, 93; Ellis 197, 254), Burbage (Goddard 189, 90) and Malton (Robinson 1978 35, no 270; 36 no 293).

- 1.1.8 The fragments of lava which were recovered, although small, are almost certainly parts of querns or millstones, though they retain no original features and can add nothing to our understanding of the typology of lava rotary querns. The recovery of fragments of lava, which weathers easily and becomes very friable, is commonplace and indeed, many fragments have also been found in Springhead itself (Roe 1999, 29). Within the CTRL project, lava querns or evidence of lava querns has also been found at Thurnham ARC THM 98 (Shaffrey 2000) and Hurst Wood ARC HWD 98 (Shaffrey 2000). The presence of lava querns and fragments at Springhead and it's associated cemetery is unsurprising as lava querns have been found at sites across Kent and the local region. Examples include Darenth (Black 1987, 117; Payne 1897, 74) and Keston Roman Villa (Philp et al 1991, 179) where only fragments remain.

Potential for further work

- 1.1.9 No further work is recommended. This assessment report can be used for any further synthetic studies.

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Shaffrey, R.L 2000 Assessment of Stone from Thurnham for the Oxford Archaeological Unit

Shaffrey, R.L 2000 Assessment of Stone from Hurst Wood for the Oxford Archaeological Unit

Table 2.3: Catalogue of Worked Stone

Context	Count	Material	Comments
ARC PHL 97			
882	1	Ironstone	?whetstone, one concave and smoothed surface
724	1	Ironstone	Cylindrical shape with grooves across the width.
ARC NBR 98			
10275 SF386	1	Fine grained Greensand	Possible whetstone or arrow sharpener? Cylindrical with one long shallow groove lengthways.

Table 2.4: Catalogue of Unworked Stone

Context	Count	Material	Comments
ARC PHL97			
736	1	Fine grained ironstone	Unworked angular fragment
834 SF1312	1	Ironstone	Unworked angular fragment
800	1	Gravel/pebble	Unworked
543	1	Ironstone	Sub angular unworked
589	3	Ironstone	Fragments
120	1	Ironstone	Flat fragment
718	15	Flint gravel	Unworked
691	16	Flint gravel	Unworked
305	2	Cherty gravel	Unworked
628	1	Ironstone	Fragment
207	1	Ironstone	Chunk
351	1	Flint	Fragment
120	1	Flint	Tiny chunk
140	2	Flint	Tiny fragments
419	1	Ironstone	Fragment
936	1	Ironstone	Unworked fragment
1077	1	Ironstone	Sub rounded chunk
921 SF809	1	Red ironstone	Unworked
1147	2	Ironstone	Chunks
1147	2	Ironstone	Fragments
1220	1	Flint	Fragment
912	1	Ironstone	Small fragment
902	1	Ironstone	Sub angular fragment
883	5	Chert	Fragments
883	1	Pebble	Fragment
718	1	Flint	Chunk
91	1	Chert	Pebble fragment
718	3	Ironstone	Fragments
718	26	Flint/chert	Tiny
718	10	Flint / chert	Pebble gravel
835	1	Pebble	Large water worn pebble
835	11	Ironstone	Small fragments
835	24	Gravel / pebble	Fragments
835	71	Gravel / pebbles	Rounded and unworked
ARC NBR98			
10018	7	Lava	Small fragments
	1	Very red ironstone	Unworked sub angular fragment