

APPENDIX 1 - HUMAN REMAINS

1.1 Human Remains

by Angela Boyle

Introduction

- 1.1.1 A single cremation deposit was recovered during excavation works at South of Snarkhurst Wood.
- 1.1.2 The single cremation was subject to 100% recovery as a whole-earth sample and subsequently wet-sieved. Material from the >2 mm fraction was retained.
- 1.1.3 The recovery and study of the material was carried out in accordance with the fieldwork event aims specified in section 2 of the main report, above, with specific reference to change or continuity in late Iron Age/Romano-British burial practice.

Methodology

- 1.1.4 Cremated 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 by context, context type, period, weight, identifiable fragments, colour and minimum number of individuals, as in Table 6.1 below. All fragments of unburnt bone were also examined to determine preservation, completeness and age. The > 2 mm fraction was scanned with a view to determining whether or not it should be sorted for small fragments of human bone.

Quantification

Table 6.1: Details of cremation burial

Context	Context type	Weight	Identifiable fragments	Colour	Minimum number of individuals
127	Fill of feature 236	188 g	Skull vault, occipital, ?incisor root, femur and tibia shaft	White and grey	1?

Provenance

- 1.1.5 A single deposit of cremated human bone (127) was recovered from feature 236, located in the western part of Area B. No pottery or dating evidence was available for this feature. Areas of burning were identified and quantities of charcoal were also present, therefore the feature may have been a pyre site.

Conservation

- 1.1.6 The material does not require any conservation for the purposes of long-term storage. The CTRL Act 1996 requires that all human remains are reburied.

Comparative material

- 1.1.7 Unfortunately this deposit is undated and therefore cannot be compared with other material. From the location it is likely to be Iron Age, and if dated would have been of interest as small cemeteries associated with rural settlement of this period are not well known in the south-east of England (Drewett, Rudling and Gardiner 1988, 233).

Potential for further work

- 1.1.8 The potential of the material is limited by the fact that it is an isolated undated example, and by the small size of the deposit. An average adult cremation can weigh between 1000-2400 g if complete (McKinley 1997, 68; observations at modern crematoria). Clearly, then the deposit from this site does not represent the entire remains of any one individual. The material has no further potential for analysis.

Bibliography

Drewett, P, Rudling, D and Gardiner, M, 1988 *The south-east to AD 1000, London*

McKinley, J, 1997 The cremated human bone from burial and cremation-related contexts, in *Archaeological excavations on the route of the A27 Westhampnett Bypass, West Sussex, 1992. Volume 2: the cemeteries* (A P Fitzpatrick), Wessex Archaeology Report No **12**, 55-73