

Excavations at Rocky Clump, Stanmer Park, Brighton, 1951–1981

by Oliver J. Gilkes

Excavations were carried out at Rocky Clump over a number of years on behalf of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society. Work in the wooded interior of the Clump revealed an interesting sequence stretching from Romano-British occupation to activity possibly connected with the laying out of the Park in the 18th century. Of particular interest were a substantial Roman timber structure and an overlying early–mid-Saxon cemetery.

INTRODUCTION

The south-western periphery of the Stanmer Park Estate is delimited by the thick belt of Stanmer Great Wood. Within the park are a series of plantations and between 1951 and 1981 excavations were carried out within the small wooded area known as Rocky Clump (Fig. 1 inset, Fig. 2). The project was organized by a group of members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society, the late C. W. Yeates, the late W. Gorton and K. Goodchild. The excavations had the support of the society. With the assistance of numerous helpers this team worked at weekends for almost 20 years at Rocky Clump and other sites in the Stanmer–Coldean area. In the early 1980s a further campaign of excavation was undertaken by C. F. Skeggs with the co-operation of the original excavators.

The name of Rocky Clump is derived from a number of large, partially buried Sarsen stones, probably glacial erratics, lying amongst the trees (J. Cooper pers. comm.). An area within the Clump was completely cleared and a number of exploratory trenches were dug in the surrounding fields. The site was well recorded and although some of the documentation is no longer extant, the finds were sufficiently clearly marked to permit their assignment to particular horizons and features. For the purposes of this report each identifiable archaeological horizon was provided with a context number and this sequence is utilized in the report below. A series of brief annual reports was published by the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society (Gorton & Yeates 1952–58; 1961; Skeggs 1981).

THE EXCAVATIONS

The site lies on an east-facing spur (TQ 328 101) overlooking Stanmer village (Fig. 1 inset). The geology of the locality is Upper Chalk with a covering of Clay-with-Flints still surviving in some areas. A number of solution holes were discovered during the course of excavation. The Sarsen stones within the Clump are also tertiary deposits and probably account for the creation of the Clump in the 18th century: the large protruding rocks must have interfered with ploughing. Given the effort required to remove them — they each seem to weigh several tons — turning the area over to woodland was probably an acceptable alternative (Fig. 2). The Stanmer parish boundary runs east–west through the Clump, and is still visible as a slight earthwork in the field to the west.

PERIOD 1: ROMANO-BRITISH

Phase 1

The earliest utilization of the site is attributable to this period. A number of features were cut into the chalk bedrock. Most of these contained no finds and as some of the records relating to them are now missing, it is no longer possible to confirm that these features, with the exception of post-hole 34, are of Romano-British date. Here, only features for which records survive will be considered. Dimensions are given where these are known.

Feature 5 (Figs 1 & 3A)

This feature was a large irregular depression 3.60 m long by 3.30 m wide and 0.60 m deep. It may have been a small quarry hole, later refilled with domestic refuse which included a quantity of iron objects and

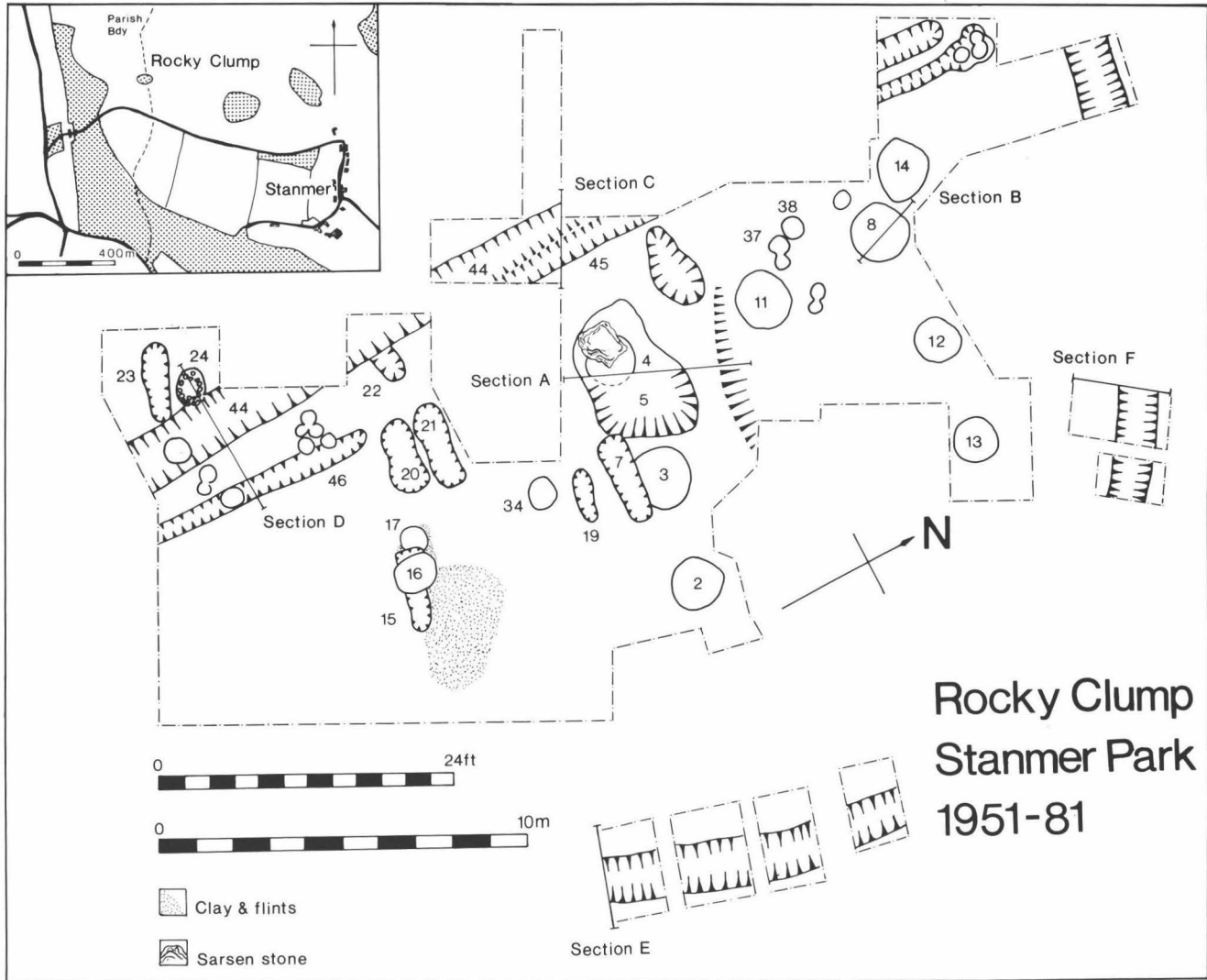


Fig. 1. Plan of excavations at Rocky Clump.

pottery. A single sherd of grog-tempered pottery had a lattice decoration possibly attributable to the 1st or 2nd centuries AD.

Feature 34 (Fig. 1)

This was a single post-hole, 0.81 m deep and of unknown diameter. The only diagnostic find was a fragment of pottery possibly of the 2nd century.

Phase 2

Features 2, 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13 & 14
(Figs 1, 2 & 3)

With the exception of feature 14, this group of post-holes are at least 1 m in diameter and 0.70 m in depth. These features are, perhaps, best considered as a group as they appear to form the northern end of a substantial timber structure whose posts were some 300 mm in diameter. Finds from features 2, 3, 4 and 8 have a date range of c. AD 150–220. Features 11, 12, 13 and 14 produced no finds. Post-pipes

were observed in all the features and that in feature 14, which lies outside the area of the other seven, was inclined towards feature 8. This post-hole was also unusual in being considerably shallower than the others of the group.

The nature of the structure represented by these features is not clear, although to judge from the size



Fig. 2. Excavations at Rocky Clump, general view east.

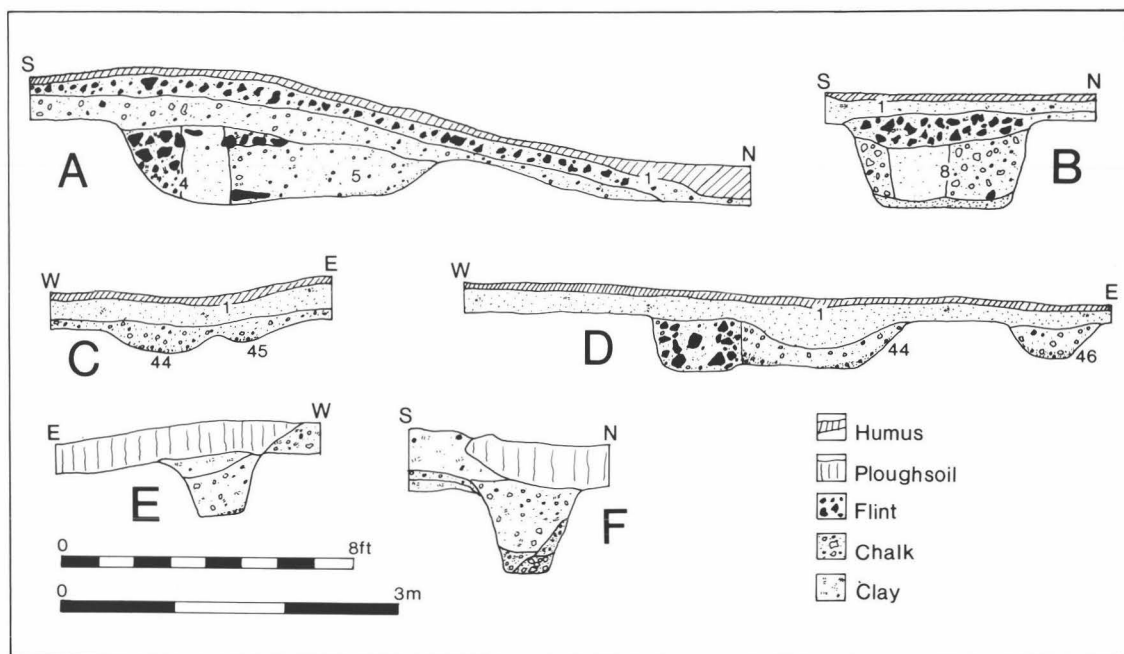


Fig. 3. Excavations at Rocky Clump, sections.

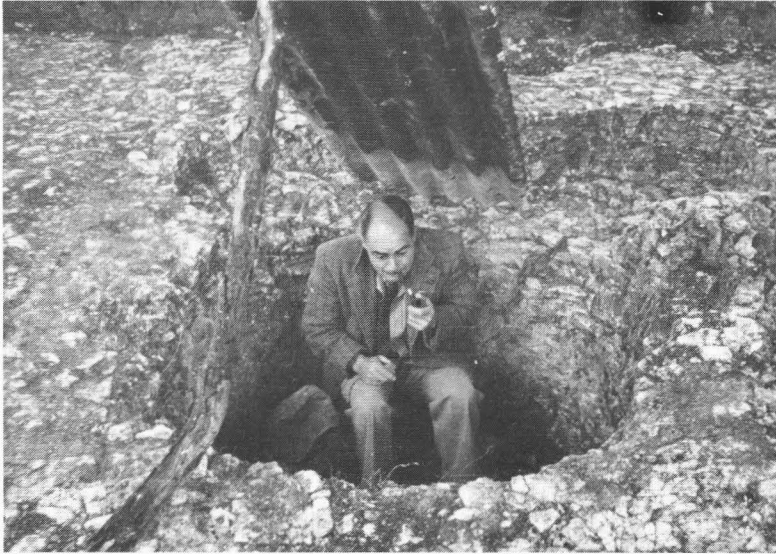


Fig. 4. Feature 3.



Fig. 5. Grave 7.

of the post-holes it was obviously substantial (Fig. 4) The original excavators suggested that the building may have been of square form and very tall. A Romano-Celtic shrine, of timber and thatch construction, was proposed (Gorton & Yeates 1988). However, there is little corroborating evidence from the site for a 'ritual' function, apart from the possibly fortuitous positioning of a Saxon cemetery in period 2 and the place-name evidence (see discussion below). Given the lack of structural evidence for the eastern side and other details, it is unsafe to speculate. The building may just as equally

have had an agricultural or domestic function.

Feature 6 (not shown on plan)

To the east of the main site and some metres outside the encircling ditch, trial trenching revealed a rubbish pit and a shallow depression interpreted as a hut floor by the excavators. Unfortunately, the exact position of this feature is no longer known and some confusion exists over the provenance of the finds. However, the pit was sealed by context 7, a horizon of dark loamy soil. The 'hut floor' possibly an occupation surface, can be given a *terminus post quem* of AD 260–285 by coins found within its make-up. The pit itself contained domestic refuse, oyster shells, animal bones and ceramics of early-3rd-century date.

A further 'hut floor' was found to the east of feature 6. No finds appear to have survived from this and a sketch section surviving amongst the documentation (now in the possession of John Funnell) appears to show a natural solifluction hole filled with clay, flints and Sarsen fragments.

The end of period 1 occupation at Rocky Clump cannot be assigned with any accuracy. None of the features produced finds datable to beyond the later 3rd century. A single sherd of Fulford's (1975) New Forest Ware fabric 1b from the topsoil, context 1, does suggest continued activity as late as the end of the 3rd century. However, this was an isolated find and may suggest nothing more than casual utilization.

PERIOD 2: POST-ROMAN/ANGLO-SAXON (Fig. 1)

The first post-Roman activity identified at Rocky Clump was a small cemetery which lay to the south of the site of the Roman timber structure. Trial trenching to the north, south and east did not reveal any further graves and the limits of the cemetery may have been reached in these areas. A total of seven graves were excavated (features 7, 15, 19–23). All the burials examined were oriented with heads west, and in graves 7 (Fig. 5) and 23 the left forearm was crossed over the lower torso. The only find was a small iron knife from the fill of grave 15. Human remains from three graves: 7, 19 and 23, were examined and are reported on below.

There is a lack of dating evidence from these graves, although some of them cut period 1 Roman features indicating a late or post-Roman date. Martin Welch has included the group within his corpus of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (Welch 1983: 431, no. 54), although he lists no dating evidence. The single find recovered, the iron knife from the fill of grave 15, is of Anglo-Saxon type, Evison's (1987) type 2, with a possible date range of c. 450–700. Finally, while far from conclusive, the general lack of grave goods and the east–west orientation might suggest a Christian ritual pointing more towards the mid-Saxon period than the early. Graves 22 and 23 had been disturbed by the later agricultural activity on the site indicating that the cemetery had been abandoned for some time when this commenced.

PERIOD 3: MEDIEVAL AND POST-MEDIEVAL (Fig. 1)

A period of agricultural utilization followed the abandonment of the cemetery. At the northern end of the site ploughing appeared to have cut into the chalk bedrock. A single sherd of 14th-century green-glazed pottery was found in the topsoil in this area.

On the western edge of the site a series of ditches or gullies was excavated. Feature 44 was a shallow north–south ditch c. 1 m wide and 250–300 mm deep which truncated graves 22 and 23; the terminal of the ditch was seen within the excavation (Fig. 1).

Feature 44 had been recut by the ditch 45 which was even less substantial than its predecessor, being only 500 mm in width and 150 mm or less in depth (Fig. 3). The ditch terminated in a series of post-holes. A further shallow ditch, 46, was found to the east of the other features (Fig. 2). This was much shorter than ditches 44 and 45 and its relationship with these is uncertain. Nothing was found in any of these features. The whole system probably

represents a series of slight field boundaries or fence lines associated with gateways.

The original excavators (Gorton & Yeates 1988, 6) connected these ditches with the boundaries of the Saxon estate of Stanmer granted in c. 765 by King Aldwulf of the South Saxons (Sawyer 1968). The parish boundary, which seems to follow the limits of the estate, runs through the Clump on the same north–south alignment as features 44–6, and seems to be visible as an earthwork in the field to the south. However, features 44–6 have no demonstrable relationship with the parish boundary and may be much later. Possibly these features represent the subdivisions of the virgates of the West Laine field of Old Stanmer village (Warne 1989, 196).

PERIOD 4: 18TH–20TH CENTURIES

During the 18th century the area of Rocky Clump was planted with trees as part of the general landscaping of the Stanmer estate (Farrant 1979, 195–200; Warne 1989, 207). Features 16 and 24 may be associated with this process. These were both

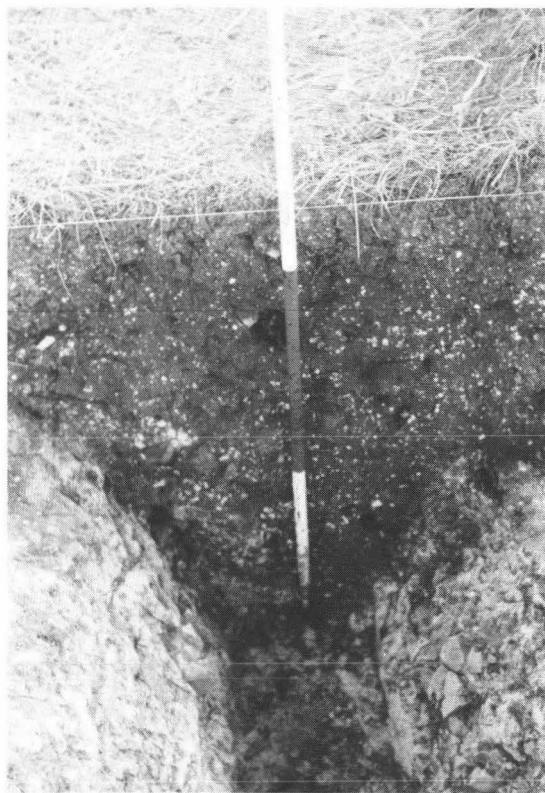


Fig. 6. Section of the ditch around Rocky Clump.

post-holes, the latter packed with chalk, which truncated earlier features including ditch 44 (Fig. 3D).

A further feature which probably belongs to this period is the elliptical ditch which runs round and through the present limits of the Clump. The course of the ditch is still traceable on the ground, and the remains of a hawthorn hedge are to be seen on its inner lip. Excavations carried out in 1981 revealed a 'v'-shaped feature with a flat bottom (Figs 1, 3 & 6).

Unfortunately, most of the finds have been lost, but the surviving material and notes on the work relate the presence of both Roman and medieval pottery in the ditch fill. The excavator (Skeggs 1981) suggested that the medieval pottery was intrusive

and that the ditch was Roman. However, the surrounding topsoil contains both Roman and later pottery; the finds in the ditch could well be redeposited.

All the features within the Clump were sealed by the topsoil, context 1. This consisted of several distinct elements including the latest humic deposition which covered the remaining traces of the original topsoil. This latter appears to have originally existed both in and outside Rocky Clump and was observed at various times during the excavation. However, the 1981 excavations on the encircling ditch revealed that recent ploughing had encroached on the Clump and destroyed parts of this horizon (Fig. 3E-F).

THE FINDS

COINS

Seven coins were found during the excavations. These were examined by Dr Roger Bland of the British Museum who made the following identifications.

Context 1

1. *Antoninianus* of Tetricus 1 (AD 271–274)
Obv: radiate head r. IMP C TETRICUS P.F. AVG
Rev. Spes standing l. SPES PVBLICA
Trier mint RIC 136

The 'hut floor' — the horizon of soil overlying feature 6

2. Illegible late Roman coin, probably a radiate issue or contemporary imitation c. AD 260–285.
3. Radiate copy of Tetricus 1. Minted in Gaul or Britain c. AD 271–285.
4. As for no. 3.
5. Radiate copy of c. AD 260–275. Minted in Gaul or Britain AD 271–285.
6. As for no. 5.

Feature 6

- 7 Illegible 2nd-century Sestertius of either Faustina II (AD 146–175) or Lucilla (AD 161–169).

OBJECTS OF IRON (Fig. 7)

Feature 5

1. A slightly tapering iron plate with two puncture holes for rivets at the wider end and a single hole on the shorter. Possibly part of a box fitting. Length 700 mm, width 44 mm.
2. Portion of an iron plate, possibly part of the same object as no. 1. Length 53 mm, width 44 mm.
3. Nail with a square head. Length 93 mm.
4. Small iron nail with a square head. Length 43 mm.
5. Small iron nail with a square head. Length 37 mm.
6. Small iron nail. Length 57 mm. Not illustrated.
7. Part of a broken iron nail. Length 57 mm. Not illustrated.
8. Iron hook. Length 55 mm.

Feature 2

9. A fragment of an iron plate. Length 48 mm, width 34 mm. Not illustrated.
10. A large square-headed nail with a square cross-section. Length 96 mm.

Feature 3

11. A blade of a sickle or bill hook. Most implements of this type were probably used for stripping wood, coppicing and laying hedgerows rather than for actual harvesting of crops. Length 92 mm.
12. Oval ring. Diameter 62 mm.

Feature 15

13. A small iron knife with a flat back and a curved cutting edge. Bar a few fragments of Roman ceramics from grave 7, this was the only artefact recovered from any of the graves and is consequently important for the dating of these features.

This knife can be related to Evison's typological sequence of such implements from the Buckland cemetery at Dover. Certainly this example conforms to type 2 which at Dover occurs in a chronological spread from phases 1 to 6 (Evison 1987, 113, 136–7) suggesting a wide date range for the knife from Rocky Clump of c. 450–700.

The finding of this knife in the fill of the grave, rather than in association with the skeleton, may also be significant. A similar phenomenon has been observed at Dover and elsewhere in Kent (Evison 1987, 18–19).

THE POTTERY

The excavations at Rocky Clump produced 10.721 kg of ceramics, a small but interesting assemblage worth studying in some detail. A macroscopic examination of each sherd produced a fabric series which was counted and weighed. The data are shown in Table 1 as sherd number: weight, by context and fabric group. The material chosen for illustration is listed in the catalogue.

Fabric groups

A. Sandy buff wares

Coarse wares in a hard, off-white/buff fabric with inclusions of coarse quartz sand and mica.

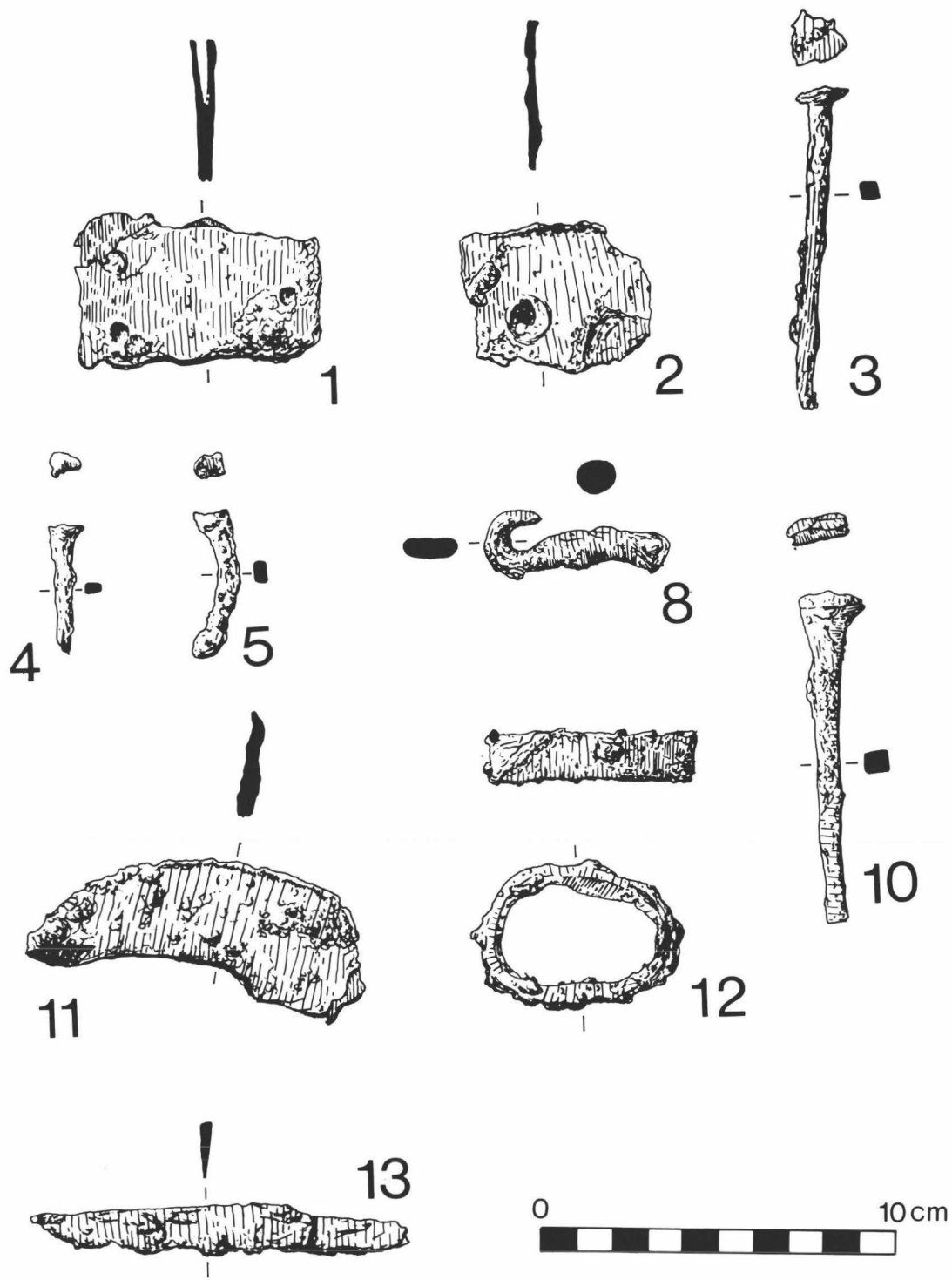


Fig. 7. Rocky Clump, objects of iron.

Table 1. Pottery (sherd count:weight) shown by fabric and context number.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	34	37/38
A	2:5	43:945	7:115	-	1:18	5:187	-	-	1:1	-	2:10
B	17:170	-	-	5:65	-	10:218	-	13:320	-	7:99	-
C	21:1673	16:286	5:114	10:112	11:220	29:968	-	-	3:3	-	-
D	86:893	29:815	28:258	9:95	18:277	32:570	5:76	1:20	1:46	5:132	4:61
E	1:10	-	-	1:1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
F	-	-	-	-	-	1:250	-	-	-	-	-
G	2:10	-	-	-	-	1:260	-	1:10	-	-	-
H	-	-	-	-	-	1:10	-	-	-	-	-
I	-	-	-	1:20	-	1:150	-	-	-	-	-
J	1:40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
K	1:15	-	1:60	1:22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
L	-	-	-	3:50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6:180	-	1:1	-
N	1:10	-	-	-	-	-	-	6:840	-	-	-

B. Oxidized sandy wares

Coarse wares in a hard, orange-red fabric with inclusions of quartz sand and mica.

C. Reduced sandy wares

Coarse wares in a hard grey fabric with inclusions of medium-fine quartz sand and occasionally other minerals. Some vessels have a grey or black colour coat.

D. Grog-tempered wares/East Sussex wares

Coarse wares with grog tempering. These ceramics have been studied by Green (1980) who has defined them as East Sussex wares. At Rocky Clump this fabric group is remarkably homogeneous, varying little in quantity of inclusions or in colour which tends towards orange-pink.

E. Green-glazed wares

A hard orange/pink fabric with incised lines and a light green glaze. 13th- to 14th-century fine wares.

F. Pink-buff wares

Fine, hard, pink-buff fabrics with inclusions of fine sand, iron-rich clay and mica.

G. Oxidized colour-coated wares

Fine, soft-hard fabrics orange-pink in colour with inclusions of fine quartz sand. The slip varies from dark red to orange in colour. Probably Oxford products, as defined by Young (1977), or imitations.

H. Fine, micaceous wares

Fine, very hard dark grey fabrics with substantial inclusions of mica and some fine sand.

I. Black colour-coated reduced ware

A fine, very hard grey fabric with infrequent inclusions of fine sand. A fine lustrous black colour coat covers the exterior surface. Probably a Rhenish product.

J. Fine, reduced colour-coated wares

New Forest Ware fabric 1a as defined by Fulford (1975).

K. Hard, oxidized colour-coated ware

New Forest Ware fabric 1b as defined by Fulford (1975).

L. Flint-tempered ware

Coarse wares with flint and grog tempering. Both reduced and oxidized versions are present and the fabric colour varies from grey to orange.

M. Chalk-tempered wares

Coarse wares in a hard grey/pink fabric with inclusions of chalk, some grog and quartz sand.

N. Amphora fabric

A hard, buff fabric with inclusions of sand, quartz fragments, chalk and a small quantity of shell. This fabric is represented in the Rocky Clump assemblage only by several sherds of a southern Spanish Dressel 20.

Catalogue of diagnostic and illustrated pottery

(Figs 8 & 9)

The Samian ware was identified and commented on by Dr A. C. King.

Context 1

Samian: East Gaulish Dr. 31, Central Gaulish Dr. 33, Dr. 31T.

Fabric group B

1. Body sherd with burnished chevrons.
2. Body sherd with smoothed surfaces and combed chevron decoration.
3. Large shallow bowl imitation Dr. 31, orange-red fabric.

Fabric group C

4. Large everted rim jar in a light grey fabric.
5. Lower body and base of a small beaker in a mid-grey fabric.

Fabric group D

6. Small jar in a red-brown fabric.
7. Deep bowl in a brown fabric.
8. Shallow dish in a red-brown fabric.
9. Body sherd with combed chevron decoration in a red-brown fabric.

Fabric group J

10. Base of a beaker in Fulford's (1975) New Forest Ware fabric 1b, with a purple slip.

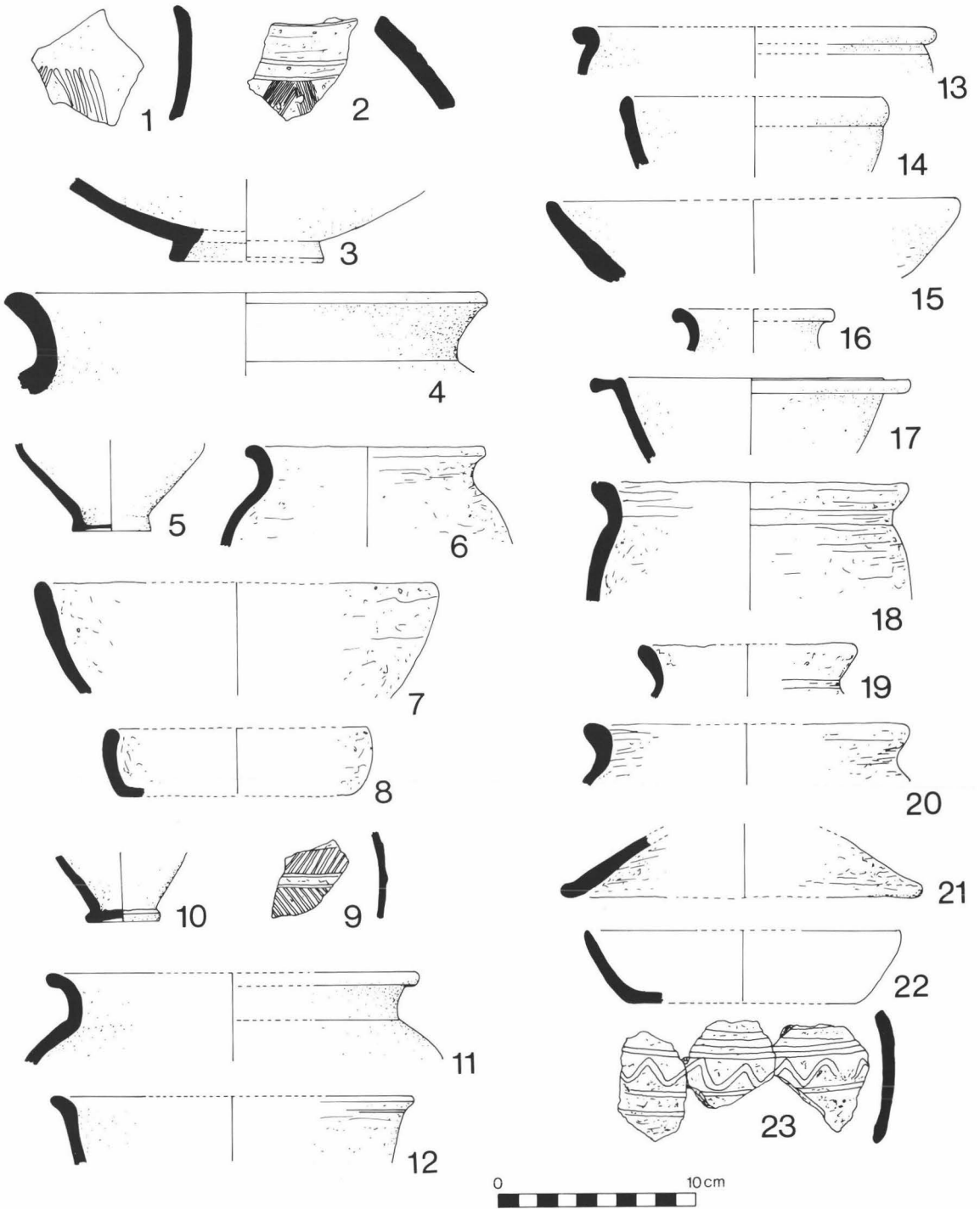


Fig. 8. Rocky Clump, pottery.

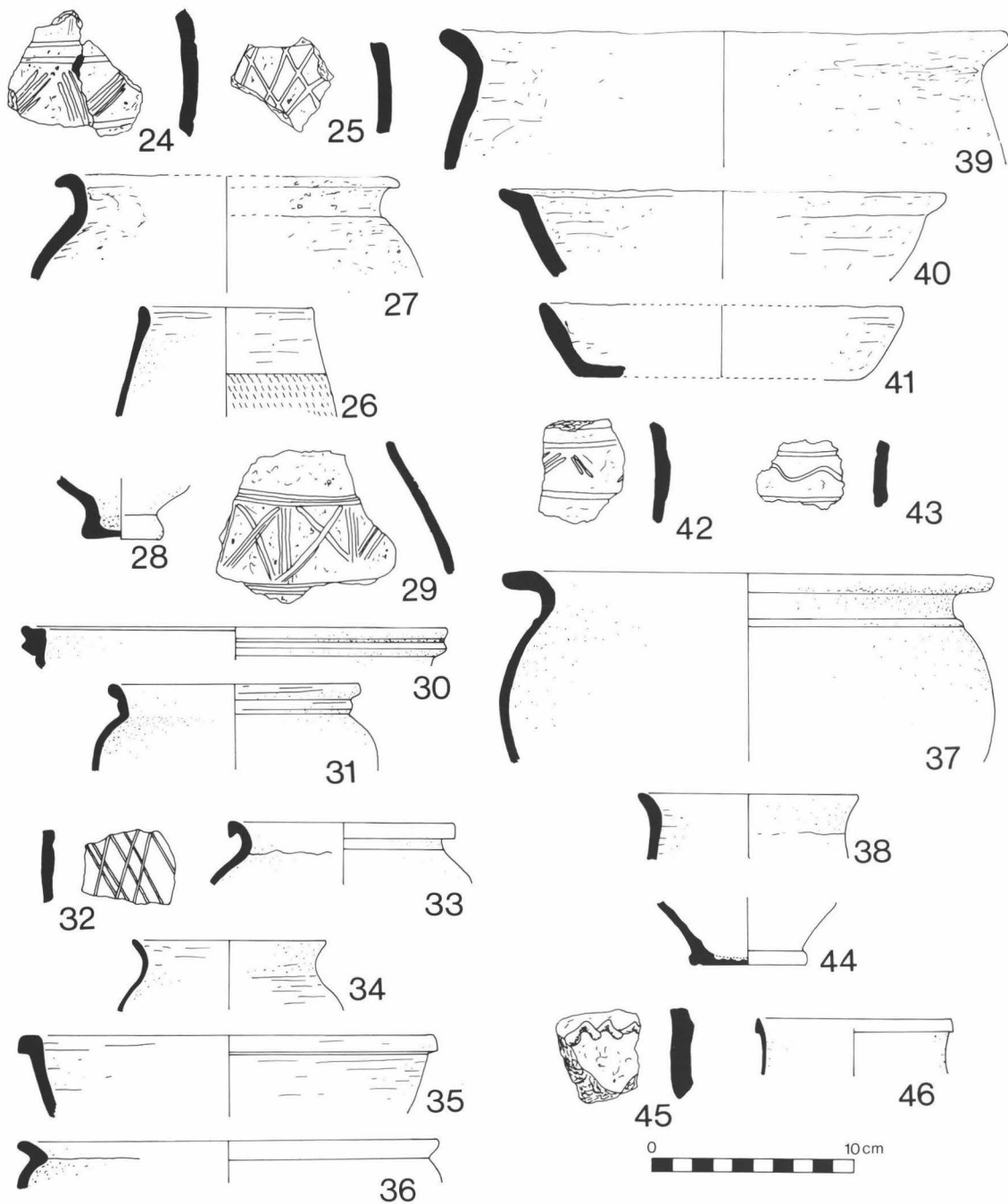


Fig. 9. Rocky Clump, pottery.

Context 2

Samian: Central Gaulish Dr. 31T.

Fabric group B

11. Jar with high out-turned rim in an orange-red fabric with a grey core.
12. Bowl with out-turned rim in an orange-red fabric.
13. Bowl with a bead rim in an orange-red fabric.
14. Bowl/dish with a simple rim and in an orange-buff fabric.
15. Dish or bowl with a simple rim in an orange-buff fabric.
16. Small necked jar, mid-grey fabric.
17. Flanged bowl with an incipient bead rim, normally an early 3rd-century type.

Fabric group D

18. Jar with a coarsely burnished surface. A groove is cut into the top of the rim. Orange-pink fabric.
19. Rim of a necked jar, orange-brown fabric.
20. Everted rim jar with roughly burnished surface, orange-brown fabric.
21. Lid in an orange-buff fabric.

Context 3

Samian: Central Gaulish Dr. 31T.

Fabric group B

22. Shallow dish in a dark grey fabric.

Fabric group D

23. Body sherds of a jar with burnished running chevron decoration between cordons, orange-buff fabric.
24. Body sherds of a jar with burnished chevron decoration.
25. Body sherd with burnished lattice decoration in a buff-brown fabric.

Context 4*Fabric group D*

27. Jar with a stepped neck and roughly burnished surface in a dark brown fabric.

Fabric group I

26. Burnished beaker with a band of rouletted decoration around the waist. Burnishing extends to just within the rim.
28. Base of a beaker in a light grey fabric.

Context 5*Fabric group D*

29. Body sherd of a necked jar with burnished decoration on a well-smoothed surface.

Context 6

Samian: Montano fabric form 27, late 1st century to early 2nd century AD. Central Gaulish Dr. 33, central Gaulish Dr. 31T, central Gaulish Dr. 18/31.

Fabric group A

30. Cornice rimmed bowl in a pink/buff fabric.
31. Small jar with a ring neck well-smoothed on the exterior. Off-white/buff fabric.

Fabric group B

32. Body sherd with inscribed lattice decoration in a red-brown fabric.

Fabric group C

33. Jar with an overhanging rim in a light grey ware.
34. Small jar burnished on the shoulder and inside the rim. Light grey fabric.
35. Bowl burnished on the exterior and interior surfaces in a grey/buff ware.
36. Everted rim jar burnished on the exterior in a grey/buff fabric.
37. Jar with cordoned shoulder and slightly drooping rim in a light grey fabric with a thin slip on the exterior. The form and slip mark this out as an Alice Holt product. Lyne and Jefferies (1979, 35) place the introduction of slipped vessels at c. AD 270.
38. Necked jar.

Fabric group D

39. Large everted rim jar in a dark grey fabric.
40. Lid seated bowl, in a dark grey fabric.
41. Shallow dish in an orange fabric.
42. Body sherd decorated with burnished chevrons and grooves; orange-buff fabric.
43. Body sherd with burnished line between cordons in an orange-buff fabric.

Fabric group G

44. Base of a beaker in an orange fabric with a dark grey colour coat.

Context 8*Fabric group D*

45. Body sherd with barbotine raised chevron decoration in an orange-pink fabric.

Fabric group G

46. Beaker with a hooked rim in a pink-buff fabric with a red colour coat.

BRICK AND TILE

Only a very small quantity of brick and tile was found during the excavations at Rocky Clump. Three fabrics were identified:

- A. Sand-tempered with coarse quartz inclusions.
- B. Sand-tempered with occasional inclusions of chalk and flint.
- C. Sand-tempered.

Context/feature	Fabric	Type	No.	Weight (g)
1	A	Box-flue	1	60
	A	Tegulae	1	115
	A	Other	1	130
2	C	Other	1	80
	B	Tegulae	1	110
6	A	Imbrex	1	77

THE HUMAN REMAINS By Sue Brown

Of the seven graves excavated human remains survive from only three. Here a grave list has been compiled using data from the original excavators' notes. The results of the examination of the three groups of skeletal material submitted, two adult males and a child aged approximately eight years from graves 7, 19 and 23, have been inserted in the appropriate places. A Saxon date is suggested for all the graves.

Grave 7

Burial oriented west-east with head to west. The postcranial remains of an adult male whose estimated height was 1.68 m

(5 ft 6 in.). The bone is friable and eroded and few joints reveal the presence of arthropathy; no pathology was recorded.

Grave 15

Burial oriented west–east with head to west. Only the skull and leg-bones of this burial survived, the rest having been disturbed by feature 16.

Grave 19

Burial oriented west–east with head to west. The poorly-preserved skull and long-bones of a child of indeterminate sex aged approximately eight years. Two phases of mild enamel hypoplasia, perhaps indicating former phases of nutritional deficiency, were observed on the incisors. No other pathology was seen and the cause of death is unknown.

Grave 20

Burial oriented west–east with head to west. The skeleton was badly disturbed.

Grave 21

Burial oriented west–east with head to west.

Grave 22

Burial of an adult oriented west–east with head to west. Only

the leg-bones survived as this grave had been truncated by ditch 44.

Grave 23

Burial oriented west–east with head to west. The skull only (submitted already reconstructed) was examined. This was of a male aged probably 17–25 years. Estimation of the age of this individual is tentative because it is based on the degree of attrition in the molar teeth, but the first and second molars do not occlude due to the pattern of dental decay: attrition in the anterior teeth suggests that he may have been older. All 32 teeth are *in situ* and there are heavy calculus deposits on the right lower third molar. Severe dental decay was recorded in the first and second upper molars and the second and third lower molars on both sides of the mouth. Almost the entire crown of the upper right molars is destroyed and the left upper molars are destroyed to the roots. In the maxilla, pulp exposure was recorded in the right M2 and the left M1, and an apical abscess in the region of the right M1 and the left M2. In the mandible, both M2s and M3s show medium–large buccal cavities. No other oral pathology was recorded. The cranium shows mild supra-orbital osteoporosis.

Metric and non-metric data for the examined burials is deposited with the archive.

DISCUSSION

While they were limited in scope, the excavations at Rocky Clump investigated an interesting archaeological sequence comprising part of a Romano-British settlement and a later inhumation cemetery.

The block of East Sussex downland between the rivers Adur and Ouse has been the subject of little modern systematic archaeological excavation. The pioneering excavations of E. C. Curwen at Thundersbarrow Hill in 1932 (Curwen 1933) have been followed up by the rescue work of Ray Hartridge at Slonk Hill, Shoreham (Hartridge 1978). The recent rescue work on the line of the Brighton bypass adds immeasurably to our knowledge of downland settlement and supplements the picture drawn by small-scale and salvage work over the last 90 years.

The occupation sequence at Rocky Clump is uncomplicated: ceramics and coins of the 2nd century AD date the commencement of the sequence which closes in the last decades of the 3rd century. In the immediate locality downland settlement is known to have continued later than this: rescue work during the construction of the Coldean Estate revealed a sequence which encompassed the Iron Age through to the 4th century AD. At Falmer two corn-drying ovens of the mid-4th century AD were excavated in the 1950s. Further to the west Curwen's

work at Thundersbarrow Hill in any case showed that downland settlement lasted well into the 4th century. To the north of Thundersbarrow Hill unpublished excavations in the 1950s at Truleigh Hill recovered a similar ceramic sequence to that at Thundersbarrow as well as a silver *siliqua* of Gratian (AD 375–383) and a late Roman strap end (finds and documentation in Brighton Museum).

The feature of primary interest at Rocky Clump in the Roman period is the possible building represented by post-holes 2, 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13 and perhaps 14. From what we know of their dimensions these posts would seem too massive for a mere stock enclosure, such as structure LXIII at Bishopstone (Bell 1977, 149), and are convincing as the western end of a substantial timber structure or stockade with an internal width of some nine metres and unknown length.

Later disturbance had removed any possibility of floor levels surviving. The original excavators suggested that these post-holes represented the remains of a Romano-Celtic temple (Gordon & Yeates 1988, 8–9). Their proposal was based on the plan, which is incomplete, and on the place-name evidence (*see below*) for an early Saxon shrine, which they believed would have been focused on the substantial lumps of naturally occurring Sarsen stone. This, they argued, was probably the continuation of an earlier tradition represented by the Roman timber building. Certainly this latter is substantial, so much so that one has to doubt

whether it was roofed or whether it existed as an open massive stockade. However, there is no other evidence to support the suggestion of a Romano-Celtic shrine and it must be considered as but one of a number of possibilities.

The second major element of the site is the cemetery. Given the lack of grave goods, the interpretation of this is difficult, although it is clear from the very small number of graves that a very small group, perhaps only a single family, may be represented here. The excavators suggested that this was a Saxon cemetery reusing an earlier religious site. The sacred nature of the Romano-British remains are doubtful, although there remains the place-name evidence. The local field-name, 'Patchway', has been advanced to support the idea of a religious site in the vicinity. The etymology of the name was examined by Stenton who suggested that the name is derived from *Pettelswige* or *Paccasweoh*, meaning the shrine or sacred place of an individual named Paecel (Stenton 1973, 102). While this is possible, it is difficult to make an exact connection between the name and either the Roman timber structure, which seems in any case to have been abandoned by the 4th century, or the cemetery. The knife from the cemetery provides a very wide

possible chronological spread, c. 450–700, for its use. This spread is really too wide to permit the meaningful positioning of the Rocky Clump cemetery within the context of early Anglo-Saxon Sussex. If the earlier date were accepted then this would place Rocky Clump into a very early historical context, to some degree at odds with other early burial evidence (Welch 1983), and it might be easier to see the cemetery as part of the wider pattern of settlement and burial in 6th- and 7th-century Sussex.

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The finds and archive are to be deposited in the Stanmer Downland Museum.

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