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## HUMAN BURIALS

Richard Grove

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As well as two graves uncovered in the E end of the church, a total of 41 burials and over 5,000 disarticulated bones were excavated from within the East range or adjacent to it. One part-skeleton, retrieved from ditch 928, is thought to be a 12th-century lay burial, 26 graves appeared to be monastic and 15 post-dated the Reformation. Of the probable monastic inhumations, five were from the East cloister alley, three were located in stone-lined graves to the NE of the Chapter house and 17 were unearthened within the Chapter house. These comprised 12 stone-lined graves and five coffin burials.

A full account of all the human remains is contained within the archived site record.

A number of the monastic burials had been disturbed and their bones lost, displaced or damaged as a consequence. Most of this damage took place during the final re-organization of the Chapter house. The rebuilding of the E wall disturbed four graves, three of which (Graves 9, 10 and 11) were foreshortened and their skeletons replaced in disorganized states with some elements missing and miscellaneous bones from elsewhere added. The insertion of the Period IV central pier disturbed the two skeletons within stone-lined graves 4 and 5 although the disarticulated bones were replaced. In common with other graves, the relocated bones were in much better condition than those still *in situ*.

Another Chapter house grave, 8, was disturbed by a later coffin burial (Grave 13) and two others outwith the building had also suffered during later developments, Grave 28 in the East cloister alley and Grave 18 to the NE of the Chapter house.

## PRESERVATION OF SKELETONS

The conditions dictating the state of preservation are complex. In general, the style of burial and the subsequent disturbance have the greatest influence although duration of burial is obviously an important factor. The latter point was demonstrated by the states of the post-Reformation skeletons which survived better than those from monastic levels. However, there were exceptions to this: in particular, the articulated remains within coffins and sarcophagi were in a much worse condition than the disarticulated bones recovered from earlier levels in the Chapter house. Many of the stone coffins survived intact, thus allowing airborne bacteria prolonged contact with the skeletons inside, whereas in Grave 18, where the sarcophagus had collapsed inwards covering the corpse with soil, the skeleton was well-preserved. In all but one case (Grave 18) the bones within sarcophagus burials were soft, eroded and cracked, and frequently discoloured grey or even black. The worst affected were those bones in contact with damp coffin bases.

Teeth tended to survive even when the jaw had rotted, probably because of their high mineral content. Foot bones also survived well, particularly in Graves 2, 4, 5, 7 and 13, having perhaps been protected by leather shoes (although the shoes from Graves 9, 10 and 11 seemed to offer little protection).

The condition of remains within wooden coffins was consistently poor. The bones were often crushed, probably by the weight of soil following the inward collapse of the coffins.

## AGE AND SEX

The poor condition of the majority of skeletons restricted the number of criteria available to estimate the sex of individuals and their age at death (Brothwell 1981; Genoves 1969; Krogman 1962). In particular, the more fragile bones of the skull and pelvis, which provide the most reliable and greatest number of criteria, rarely survived intact. It is clear, however, that all the monastic burials were of adults, most of them being aged by means of their teeth although it was difficult to age individuals beyond 50.

## PATHOLOGY

The condition of the skeletal remains has an obvious influence on the extent to which bones and teeth can be examined for evidence of disease. Even minor damage to the surface of bone can obscure pathological change and hence many skeletons exhibited no signs of disease.

Dental diseases were common. Out of a potential total of 736 teeth (including the third molars) from 23 individuals, 351 teeth were still in their sockets. However, although most would have been lost *ante mortem*, it is apparent that only an incomplete picture of dental diseases is possible.

Ten of the 17 individuals with some teeth surviving had carious lesions whereas the three which had almost complete dentitions (in Graves 2, 18 and 27) had none. Calculus was visible on skeletons within Graves 1, 3, 8, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 26 and 27 although its extent is often difficult to estimate because it chips off easily.

The most common post-cranial diseases were degenerative. The formation of spurs of bone (osteophytes) on vertebral bodies becomes increasingly common from the third decade of life (Nathan 1962, 258) and are frequently used as manifestations of age. For want of more reliable indicators, this method was used to age the corpse in the early ditch 928. Other degenerative diseases included: the formation of Schmorle's nodes (Schmorle & Junghanns 1971); those, such as osteoarthritis, that affect the synovial joints; and periostitis. There was one probable case of gout, perhaps caused by lead poisoning.

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## 5.1 MONASTIC BURIALS

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### WITHIN THE CHAPTER HOUSE

The lack of meaningful stratigraphy, caused by the proximity of grave cuts to each other, made it difficult to work out the complete sequence of burials within the Chapter house (illus 89a, b). Without doubt, Grave 1 (illus 89b; 90) belonged to the building's initial phase of development (Period II) and several other graves certainly post-dated its final (Period IV) remodelling. However, although most of the remaining burials appeared to pre-date the Period IV developments, none could be assigned to a specific phase of the building's evolution. All seventeen graves were oriented E-W and most were found within the limits of the Period IV building.

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### PERIOD II

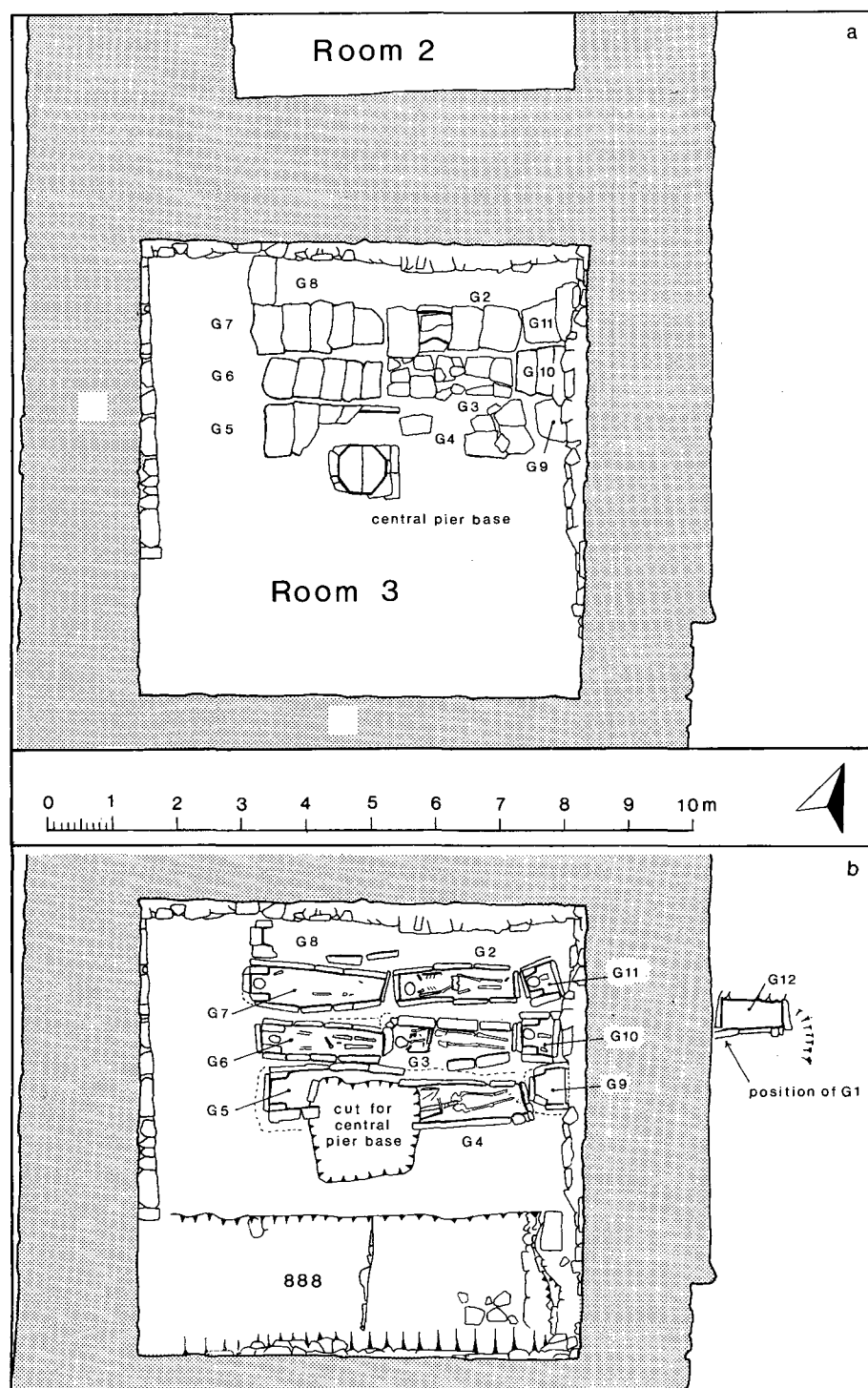
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#### GRAVE 1 (illus 89b; 90)

The insertion of the Period IV E wall destroyed the W half of this grave which was situated directly below Grave 12. Its crude sarcophagus resembled those of Graves 2, 3 and 4 (described below) although it was situated at a level 0.7–0.8m beneath them.

Almost the whole skeleton survived although the bones were

disarranged and most were damaged, having been re-interred together with some bones from at least two other individuals and a single fragment of a leather shoe. The individual was probably male, approximately 1.76m (5' 9") tall and aged 45+ at death. Degenerative change was evident in several of the vertebrae, there was slight osteophytosis in the limb bones and dental health was poor.



Illus 89  
Chapter house burials: a) plan  
of stone-lined graves with  
capstones;  
b) plan of burials showing  
central pier base and grave  
covers removed.

### PERIODS III-IV

Of these graves, 11 contained stone sarcophagi and five retained evidence of wooden coffins. The stone-lined graves (illus 91) were divided into three groups:

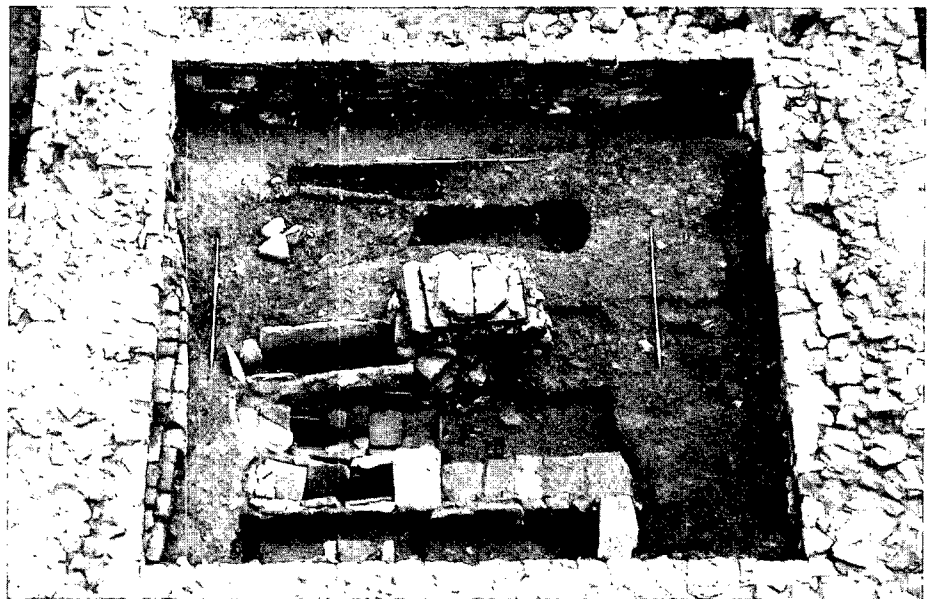
A Three graves (2, 3 and 4) of simple construction, situated to the E and NE of the Period IV central pier.

B Four, more elaborately-constructed graves (5, 6, 7 and 8), to the W of group A.

C Graves 9, 10, 11 and 12, to the E of groups A and B. Similar in construction to the group B graves, these had been disturbed by the insertion of the E wall of the Period IV Chapter house.



Illus 90  
Grave 12, overlying Grave 1; from  
the S.



Illus 91  
Partially excavated graves  
within the Chapter house; from  
the N.

Also described here is pit 1064 which perhaps represents the remains of one or more disturbed burials.

#### GROUP A – GRAVES 2, 3 AND 4

This group (colour illus VII) consisted of relatively simple sarcophagi constructed of the easily laminated, dark red sandstone that constitutes the local bedrock. The coffins were built of two or three panels per side and single stones at each end, all with smooth internal faces but with markedly coarser exteriors. The stones were bonded with mortar although some clay was also used in Grave 3.

#### GRAVE 2

Internally the sarcophagus measured 1.8m long, 0.3–0.35m deep and, although having a distinct curve, it was 0.44m wide over its entire length. This was the only coffin, other than that of Grave 12, to have a stone base, neither of which was pierced. The base of Grave 2 comprised two large slabs and one small stone. All of the 70mm-thick lining stones were intact but only three capstones were *in situ*, the fourth having collapsed inwards.

The skeleton was very badly decayed, the skull vault and a few foot bones being the only elements to survive reasonably intact. The skeleton was probably that of a male, 1.72m (5' 7.5") tall and, on the evidence of tooth wear, aged 25–35 years at death. There was no indication of pathological change. Nearby was some black

organic matter, probably the decayed remains of an unidentified textile.

### GRAVE 3

The sarcophagus was 1.87m long, 0.35m deep and narrowed from a maximum 0.5m width at the shoulder to 0.32m at the feet. The sides, each comprising three panels, had been forced outwards causing the five capstones to break and collapse into the coffin. There was a head-stone but the E end-stone was simply the head-stone of Grave 10.

Although the majority of the skeleton was recovered, most of the bones were worn and damaged. In contrast, the teeth were in good condition, all but one being recovered. The morphology of the skull indicated that the corpse was that of a male, 1.80m (5' 11") tall, whose age at death was calculated as 35–45 from tooth wear but in excess of 45 years from the severe osteophytosis evident on some of its vertebrae.

### GRAVE 4

The insertion of the Period IV central pier severely damaged the W end of this grave (illus 89b) and neither its original length nor its maximum width could be determined although it appeared to narrow to a minimum of 0.48m at the feet. Each side consisted of two unequal-sized slabs. Although cracked, the two furthest E capstones were still *in situ* whereas the remainder had collapsed into the grave.

The overall condition of the skeleton was poor although the footbones were well-preserved. Part of the skull had been disturbed and subsequently replaced during alterations to the building. Of the 27 teeth recovered, only one was still within its socket. Tooth wear suggests an age of 45+ at death. Features within the skull and the morphology of the pelvis indicate that the corpse was that of a male, the stature of whom is estimated as 1.82m (5' 11.5"). There was evidence of degenerative disease in some of the limb bones.

### GROUP B – GRAVES 5, 6, 7 AND 8

These four sarcophagi, located towards the NW of the room, were constructed of the same hard, pale sandstone as the abbey's primary buildings. Other characteristics distinguishing these graves from those of group A were superior workmanship,

mortar-bonded masonry, thicker lining stones and the use of internal, lateral head-stones.

### GRAVE 5

The E end of the grave had been disturbed by the insertion of the Period IV central pier and by Grave 4 although enough survived to indicate an internal length of 2.08m and a width of 0.6m, reduced to 0.4m within the lateral headstones. Two capstones were *in situ* at the head end; the other three were dislodged. Although varying in length, the lining stones were of uniform thickness and height, those on the N side of the grave being intact while those to the S were badly damaged.

The skeleton had been badly disturbed, the only bones left *in situ* being the skull and the left humerus. Disarticulated bones, replaced from below the chest to a position near the head, were in better condition than those that remained in place. Ageing and sexing were made difficult by decay although the bones were robust which is a male characteristic. The body's stature is calculated as 1.76m (5' 9"). Within the grave fill were numerous scraps of leather, some of which were identifiable as shoe fragments.

### GRAVE 6 (illus 92)

The sarcophagus, measuring 1.8m long and narrowing from 0.5m at shoulder level to 0.35m at the feet, was defined by four stones per side, single end-stones and lateral head-stones. All five capstones were undisturbed and intact and the coffin fitted tightly into a trench the sides of which may have respected earlier, adjacent graves.

Much of the skeleton had decayed although the lower limbs were reasonably intact and the foot bones were comparatively well preserved, protected within leather shoes. The length of the right tibia gave an estimated stature of 1.71m (5' 7") and the wear on the few surviving teeth allowed for an age estimate of 25–35 years at death. It was not possible to sex the individual.

### GRAVE 7 (illus 92)

A grave cut was discernible only on the S side of the coffin and the relationship between this and neighbouring burials remains unclear. Internally the coffin measured 2.04m long and 0.6m wide at shoulder level, narrowing to 0.34m at the feet and 0.29m within the lateral head-stones. The four stones on each



Illus 92  
Group B Graves 6 and 7; from  
the N.

side of the coffin and the five capstones were all undisturbed.

Unlike the remainder of the skeleton, the foot bones were well-preserved, protected by leather shoes of which a single fragment of a left sole remained. There were no surviving skeletal criteria to determine the sex, stature or age at death of the individual.

#### GRAVE 8

Positioned between Grave 7 and the N wall of the building, this interment had been badly disturbed when a coffin burial (Grave 13) was inserted directly over it. The only intact structural elements were the head-stone, the lateral head-stones and two slabs on the S side of the coffin. The outline of the sarcophagus was not clear and its length and width could only be estimated as 1.9m and 0.55m respectively.

A few disarticulated bones had been replaced into the W end of the sarcophagus; the remainder of the skeleton appears to have been forced into the coffin of adjacent Grave 14. The skeleton appears to have been of a male, approximately 1.72m (5' 7.5") tall and, according to tooth wear, aged 21–25 at death although the extent of sutural closure suggests he was older.

#### GROUP C – GRAVES 9, 10, 11 AND 12

These graves which were similar in style to those in group B had all been disturbed by the insertion of the Period IV E wall. With the exception of Grave 12, the sarcophagi had been shortened and their disarticulated skeletons replaced thereafter.

#### GRAVE 9

Truncated to a mere 0.4m in length, the sarcophagus had a maximum surviving width of 0.55m, reduced to 0.3m between its lateral head-stones. Unusually, the lining stones were roughly tooled and the single trapezoid capstone, replaced over the shortened grave and mortared to the lining stones, had been smoothed only on its under side.

The skeleton had suffered considerably from damage and decay and, except for the vault of the skull, it was completely disarranged. The only visible indication of sex was the prominent nuchal crest and, on this criterion alone, it is assumed to be male. There were several fragments of leather shoes and, attached to some of the bones, pieces of a woollen garment.

#### GRAVE 10

A blocking stone had been used to reduce this grave's length to 0.47m; its width decreased from a maximum of 0.58m to 0.32m between the lateral headstones. The two surviving capstones had probably been re-bonded onto the masonry of the sarcophagus lining.

Most of the post-cranial bones could be paired and together with the skull and the remains of the axial skeleton constituted an almost complete skeleton. The corpse had been that of a male, approximately 1.7m (5' 7") tall. On the evidence of tooth wear, the age was estimated as 25 years at death whereas the degree of suture closure within the bones suggests the age to be greater. All the bones were damaged and decayed although some pathological change was still evident.

Among the loose bones were several which did not come from the original occupant, including two badly decayed skulls from individuals tentatively aged 25–35 and 33–45 at death. These are thought to have originated from other graves (perhaps including Grave 12) disturbed during the Period IV rebuilding programme. Also present were bones from three juveniles, one about 7 years and another about 11 years at death, which may have originated from (pre-Augustinian?) levels disturbed during building operations.

Within the grave fill were several leather objects including a near complete sole from a left shoe, a substantial part of an upper, part of the vamp of an upper and numerous miscellaneous fragments. Several of these items belonged to shoes of types that were common between the 12th and 14th centuries (4.10 above).

#### GRAVE 11 (illus 93)

It is not clear whether the odd alignment of the sarcophagus (being oriented somewhat N of E) was an original feature or the result of disturbance during the Period IV remodelling. Its shortened length was 0.44m and its width 0.5m, reduced to 0.24m between the lateral headstones. A single capstone was mortared to the lining and another had been reused as a blocking stone.

The skull and possibly the left humerus were *in situ*; otherwise the skeleton was completely disarticulated and in a poor state of preservation. Fragments of leather shoes and textile were also found within the grave. Enough evidence survived to suggest that the individual was male, about 1.76m (5' 9") in height and aged 25–35 at death. There was no indication of pathological change.

#### GRAVE 12

The W end of the sarcophagus had been destroyed by the construction of the Period IV E wall and the capstones had all been removed although the remainder of the coffin was reasonably intact. The sarcophagus, which had been foreshortened to a mere 1.26m, retained part of a sandstone base, an unusual feature at Jedburgh and shared only with Grave 2.

The human remains were from at least three individuals and it was not possible to reconstruct an accurate picture of any of them. It is quite possible that the original occupant had been disturbed during the Period IV developments and replaced in another grave (Grave 10?) and that Grave 12 was disrupted again in 1936–37 and some stray bones placed within it.

#### PIT 1064

Pit 1064, to the immediate S of Grave 12, was contemporary with the Period IV rebuilding programme. Its dimensions, 1.36m N–S × 1.35m E–W (the latter measured from the Period IV E wall, below which it extended) and its infill, which contained bones from at least four individuals, suggest that the pit was a robbing trench for two adjacent graves. It is conceivable that some of the secondary skeletal elements within Grave 10 were derived from these putative graves.

#### COFFIN BURIALS 13, 14, 15, 16 AND 17

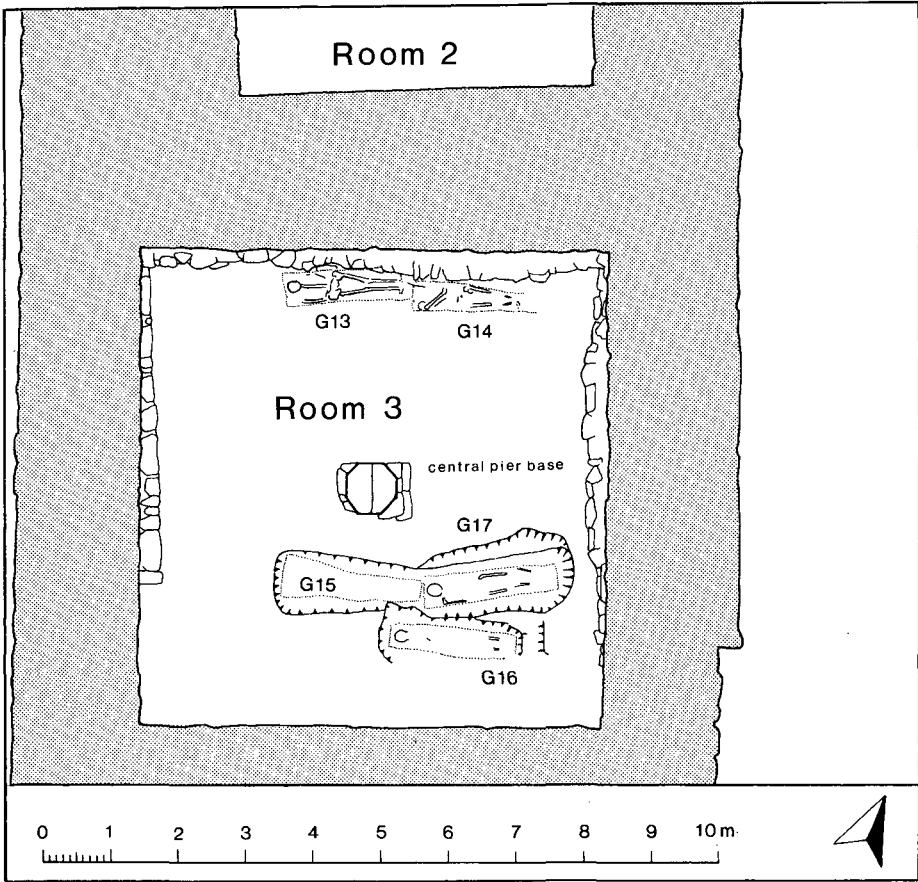
Graves 15, 16 and 17 (illus 94; 95), which cut the backfilled robber trench 888, clearly post-dated the Period IV alterations, as did Grave 14 which had disturbed contemporary sub-floor levels. The remaining coffin burial (Grave 13) could not be linked stratigraphically with others in this group although its location, directly above Grave 8, strongly suggests that this, too, was a late interment. Coffin outlines, often distorted by soil pressure, were represented by thin dark stains.

#### GRAVE 13

Most of underlying Grave 8 had been destroyed by this burial, adjacent to Grave 14 and to the N wall of the Chapter house. The gaps between the rectangular coffin, 1.9m long and 0.45–0.5m wide, and the edges of the grave pit were infilled with small stones. The skeleton was completely disarranged and poorly preserved: only one portion of a badly decayed skull and damaged fragments of long bones and foot bones survived. Over half the teeth were present, their wear suggesting the age at death to be 45+ years.



Illus 93  
Group C Graves 10 and 11,  
their sarcophagi foreshortened  
by the insertion of the E wall of  
the Period IV Chapter house;  
from the E.



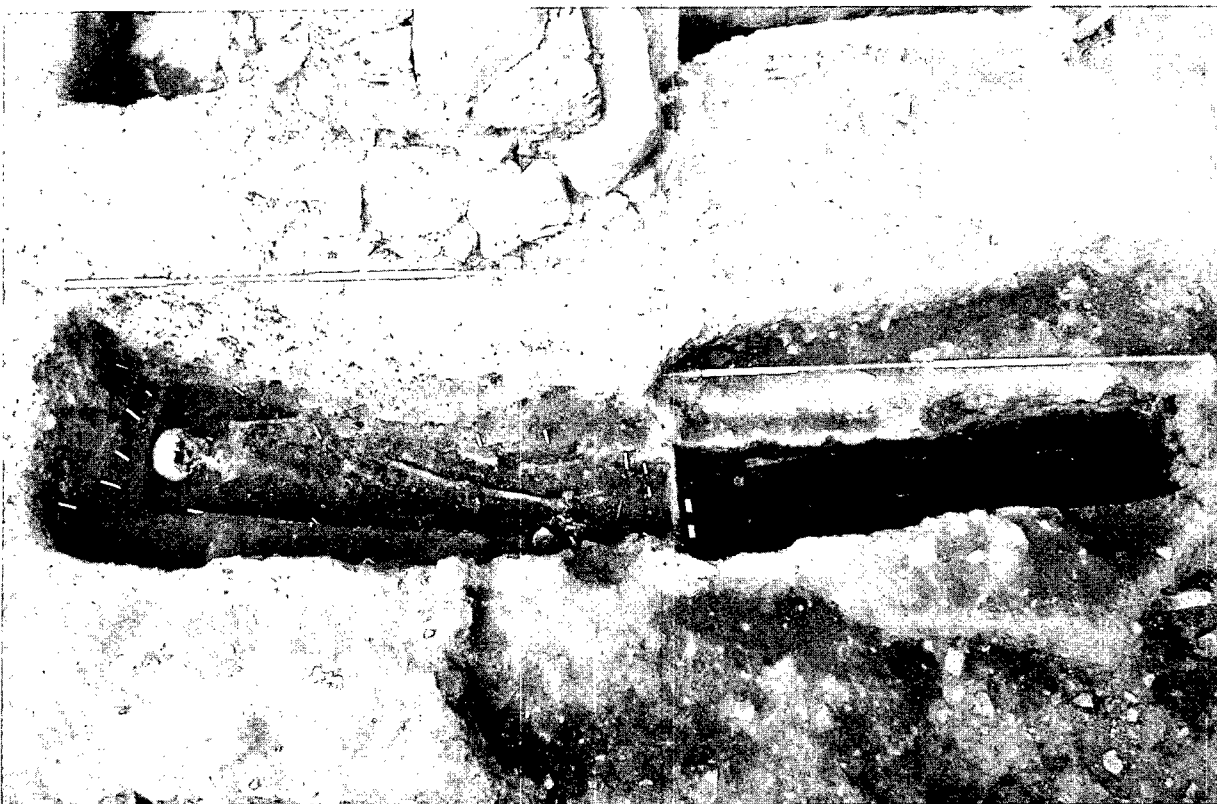
Illus 94  
Plan of Period IV coffin  
burials in the Chapter house.

GRAVE 14

The coffin was 1.8m long and approximately 0.45m wide although its W end was severely distorted by the later interment of Grave 13. Also present were an incomplete iron buckle with some associated textile, five iron nails (some with fragments of wood attached) and a worn Francis and Mary coin, dated 1559 (4.5 above). If the coin's deposition was contemporary with Grave 14

the burial would appear to date to the period immediately after the abbey's suppression.

The general condition of the skeleton was very poor, particularly those bones which had been disturbed. The vault of the skull was *in situ* and still intact although very eroded. It was difficult to tell which of the remaining bones were derived from the original occupant and which came from the underlying Grave 8.



Illus 95

Coffin burials in the S side of the Chapter house; from the S.

#### GRAVE 15

Within the grave pit, which was cut into the backfilled robber trench 888, were the remains of the coffin, defined by a dark stain, 59 iron nails and numerous small fragments of wood. The coffin measured 2.05m long and tapered from its maximum width of 0.64m at the head to 0.32m at the feet. The SE corner of the pit had been disturbed by Grave 16 although its chronological relationship with adjacent Grave 17 was unclear.

Most of the skeleton was badly decayed whereas the skull, which displayed clear masculine features, was reasonably well preserved. According to the evidence of tooth wear, the individual was aged 25–35 at death although poor dental health may have distorted the record, resulting in an under-estimation of age. There was slight evidence of pathological change to the skeleton.

Adhering to some of the bones were fragments of textile, including silk embroidered with gold and silver thread, and two copper-alloy ring brooches, one with a collared pin (4.2 above). Silver brooches of similar design have been dated to the late 13th and 14th centuries (Callander 1924; Metcalf 1977) although the examples from Jedburgh must be considerably later.

#### GRAVE 16

Within a grave pit only 0.16m deep at the excavated level were the distorted remains of the coffin, measuring 1.86m long, and 21 iron nails, some with wood attached.

Only two fragments of the skull, one with clear masculine features, and a few fragments of the post-cranial skeleton could be identified. Dark staining on the bones had presumably resulted from the decomposition of the coffin and/or clothing. Associated with the latter was an iron ring brooch or buckle, almost completely covered with textile.

#### GRAVE 17

Situated to the immediate E of Grave 15, the pit for Grave 17 accommodated a rectangular coffin, 1.96m long and 0.46m wide. Nearby were 37 iron nails, some with wood attached.

Although still partially articulated, the skeleton was in a very poor condition, having been crushed by the collapse of the coffin. An age of 25–35 at death was estimated from the wear on the 16 teeth recovered. Associated with the skeleton was a circular iron ring brooch or buckle with some unidentified textile attached.

### DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER HOUSE BURIALS

#### The sequence of burials

With the probable exception of Grave 1 which was sealed by the mortar spread associated with the Period III floor, none of the graves within the Chapter house can be dated with any certainty to the earliest phase of the building. However, Graves 9, 10, 11 and 12, which were cut by the Period IV E wall, and Graves 4 and 5,



disturbed by the insertion of the central pier, can all be said to predate the final reorganization of the Chapter house, whereas coffin burials 14, 15, 16, 17, and probably 13, all post-date that development.

The similar constructional styles of the sarcophagi of groups B and C suggest continuity of burial practice while the cruder central group, A, could fit at either end of the chronological sequence. It may be tempting to believe that the simple coffins of group A belonged to the earliest graves and that the burial sequence radiated outwards thereafter: this seems more logical than to leave a gap (conveniently grave-length) between groups B and C. However, the relatively poor quality of these sarcophagi may point to a decline in constructional standards that is evident elsewhere in the abbey: for example, in the secondary cross-walls of Rooms 6 and 11. The friable, local stone used for the group A sarcophagi is associated mainly with 14th-century building work although it would be unwise to date these graves solely on this evidence.

The difficulty of interpreting stratigraphic relationships, rendered unreliable by constant redeposition, was compounded by the close proximity of the graves to each other and by the similarity between their infills and the materials into which the graves were cut. However, one element of the stratigraphic record did support the cruder graves being the later of the two types. In the NE corner of the room a layer of loose pale brown soil and stones overlay two group C graves (10 and 11) as well as Graves 2 and 3 of group A although this material appeared to be cut by another group A burial (Grave 4) as well as by coffin burial 14.

The late 15th-/early 16th-century reconstruction of the Chapter house necessitated repairs to several graves although there were no graves in the E end of the Period III building to be disturbed. It is not clear whether the skeleton in Grave 12 had been removed during the Period IV rebuilding or during the 1936–37 excavation. If the former, a likely destination for the remains was the foreshortened Grave 10, wherein were found three adult skulls. However, if the third skull was derived from adjacent pit 1064 it is difficult to understand why the sarcophagus that was presumably within it had been removed in its entirety whilst that of adjacent Grave 12 remained almost intact.

There were few clues to the status of the graves' incumbents; certainly none could be identified with confidence as an abbot. Indeed, several of the skeletons appeared to be of young men: individuals that were unlikely to have been senior members of the monastic community. This may be an indication that the Chapter house was the final resting place of some of the abbey's benefactors or, more worrying, that current techniques for dating skeletons are unreliable. In some cases the bones were too badly decayed to allow sexing. None, however, was positively identified as female whereas lay folk of both sexes were buried in the Chapter house of Melrose Abbey after 1215 (RCAHMS 1956, 283).

### Dating the burials

The absence of grave markers and the paucity of diagnostic artefacts did little to help date any of the Chapter house burials. The last such burial at the Augustinian Priory of St Andrews Cathedral was in 1416 (RCAHMS 1933, 237) and as early as 1346 at the Cistercian abbey of Fountains (Gilyard-Beer 1970, 46). Thereafter abbots were usually interred within the church. The typology of the graves at Jedburgh provided minimal assistance towards the interpretation of the burial sequence and even less towards absolute dating. It was evident that the sarcophagus burials pre-dated those in wooden coffins, yet burials within long-cist type coffins spanned an enormous period, from the Bronze Age until the 17th century and even later on the Isle of Lewis (Henshall 1956, 269).

Most of the grave goods were in poor condition and hence unreliable indicators of date. In this respect, the leather fragments were of limited value. Some were derived from shoes of a type extremely common between the 12th and 14th centuries; others were undatable. Even the reasonably intact leather sole, the date of which falls between the mid-13th and the mid-14th century (4.10 above), was found within a grave (10) which included elements of at least three skeletons. Shoes were usually associated with laymen, rather than with canons who tended to wear sandals although, according to a late 13th-century register, a wide variety of footwear was in use at the Augustinian Priory of Barnwell, Cambridge (Clark 1897, ixxx). These included: leather shoes (perhaps worn over gaiters in summer), gaiters with leather soles and knee-length leather boots. This miscellany of footwear may be difficult to reconcile with the accepted image of monastic life but such variations may simply reflect different local traditions of dress.

## OUTSIDE THE CHAPTER HOUSE

Three graves (illus 63; 96), presumed to be monastic on the evidence of typology, were excavated to the NE of the Chapter house. These burials were within sarcophagi similar to those of groups B and C in the Chapter house although here the standard of masonry work was slightly lower. Several other graves had been disturbed by the insertion of wall 960 (illus 97) although nothing survived of their coffins or burial pits.

### THE GRAVES

#### GRAVE 18

The furthest N of these three burials, Grave 18, extended beyond the E end of the trench, leaving only 1.6m of its length uncovered. Each side of the coffin comprised four roughly cut, unmortared slabs (a fifth is assumed to have lain beyond the limit of the trench), a thin headstone and two lateral headstones. One of the four exposed capstones had collapsed inwards; a fifth may have been dislodged by a later interment.

Not all of the skeleton was exposed and hence its length could not be measured. The bones which remained *in situ* were in good condition, having been protected by soil following the collapse of the coffin. The individual was clearly male and the degree of tooth wear suggests an age of 30–35 years at death. There were numerous signs of degenerative change throughout the skeleton.

#### GRAVE 19

The grave pit measured 2.6m by 1.0m and contained a sarcophagus, 1.85m long and 0.45m wide. The two capstones that were *in situ* were mortared to a lining consisting of five stones per side, E and W end-stones and two well-cut lateral

head-stones.

Unlike those within adjacent Graves 18 and 20, the skeletal remains were sparse and in very poor condition. However, the shape of the skull suggests that the incumbent was male and aged 33–45 at death although his very poor dental health suggests he was older.

#### GRAVE 20

This was a relatively crude sarcophagus, measuring 2.0m long, narrowing from 0.5m at the head to 0.28m at the feet and contained within a grave pit, 1.0m wide. The coffin comprised five slabs per side, end-stones and internal lateral head-stones. Six roughly-fashioned capstones were wedged with small fragments of stone and bonded to the lining with small quantities of mortar.

Despite interment in a sarcophagus, the skeleton was reasonably well preserved. The skull was identified as that of a male, 1.79m (5' 10.5") tall who died at the age of 33–45 although the loss of several molars *ante mortem* suggests that this is an under-estimation. There was evidence of degenerative change within several vertebrae and within some limb bones.

## WITHIN THE EAST CLOISTER ALLEY

Of a total of five graves in this area (illus 15), two were sarcophagus burials, one retained evidence of a wooden coffin and two were simple pits.

### THE BURIALS

#### SARCOPHAGUS BURIALS

##### GRAVE 24

This grave, which abutted the W wall of the alley, had been truncated during the 1936–37 excavation, its length being reduced to 0.5m. The end-stones had been removed and single slabs of sandstone were all that remained of each side of the sarcophagus. The skeleton had been removed, probably in 1936–37.

##### GRAVE 25

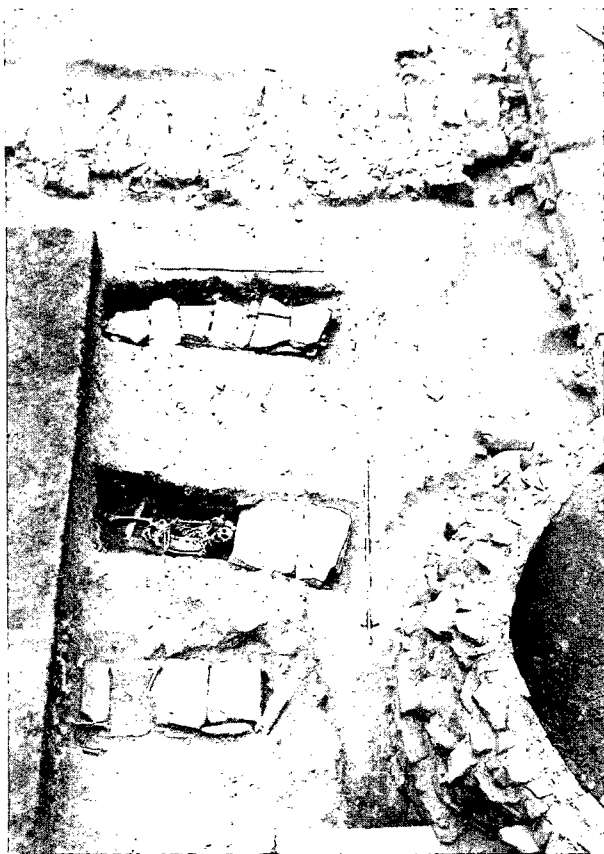
The sarcophagus which had been disturbed, probably during the 1930s excavation, measured 2.03m in length, narrowing slightly towards the foot end. Two (of three?) lining stones survived on each side and the head-stone was still *in situ* whereas the E end-stone and all but one of the capstones were missing. The skeleton had been removed, probably in 1936–37.

#### COFFIN BURIAL

##### GRAVE 28

Only 1.15m of this grave's length remained, its W end having been destroyed during the 1930s. Although the outline of the coffin could not be defined, two iron nails and a fragment of wood at the edge of the pit and two more nails within the grave's infill implied that there had been one. Also within the infill were fragments of copper and lead and a coin of Henry of Huntingdon, minted between 1136 and 1139 (4.5 above), which may have been residual.

Only the pelvis and limb bones remained articulated although some of the hand and foot bones were recovered from the grave fill. The individual was male, aged 35+ at death and of estimated height 1.79m (5' 10.5"). There was evidence of pathological change in some bones.



Illus 96  
Sarcophagus burials (Graves 18, 19 and 20) outside the East range. Grave 19, in the centre, is overlain by a post-Reformation burial (Grave 37); from the N.



Illus 97  
Re-interred burials against the W face of wall 960; from the N.

## PIT BURIALS

## GRAVE 26

The W end of this grave, which measured 2.0m × 0.5m, was overlain by the W wall of the alley, indicating either that the burial pre-dated the Augustinian occupation of the site or that the wall was a secondary structure.

With the exception of the vertebrae and ribs which had decayed almost completely, the skeleton was very well preserved. The incumbent was male, about 1.67m (5' 5.5") tall and, on the evidence of tooth wear, 21–25 years at death although the

morphology of the pubic symphases suggests he may have been a little older.

## GRAVE 27

This rather irregular pit was only 1.55m long and, to accommodate a corpse of 1.63m (5' 4") height, its head had been placed in an upright position at the W end of the grave. The burial was not fully excavated.

Most of the skeleton survived although the majority of its bones were damaged and worn. The individual was probably male; the age at death was estimated from tooth wear as 25–35 years. Some pathological change was evident.

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 WITHIN THE CHURCH
 

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## GRAVE 42 (illus 75)

Adjacent to the NE pier of the South presbytery chapel was a stone sarcophagus, badly damaged by an overlying post-monastic coffin burial (Grave 43). The remains of the sarcophagus consisted of: four neatly cut sandstone flags on its S side; recessed internal head-

stones; and, overlying the latter, the sole surviving capstone. There was no evidence that the coffin had had a stone base.

There were a few disarticulated bones within the grave fill although it was not clear if any of these had belonged to the original incumbent.

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 5.2 NON-MONASTIC BURIAL
 

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## GRAVE 38

There was no evidence of a coffin associated with this burial, or possibly re-burial, within the 12th-century sewage ditch (928) outside the East range. Although the rib cage was relatively articulated, the body had not been oriented. It is not clear whether

any of the other bones found within the same context had been part of this skeleton.

The individual was probably male and aged approximately 20–25 at death. There was no evidence of pathological change to any part of the skeleton.

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 5.3 POST-MONASTIC BURIALS
 

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Other than a single coffin burial within the presbytery of the abbey church and several possible N–S grave cuts in the Period V Chapter house (illus 98), all of the post-monastic graves that were uncovered were situated to the NE of the Chapter house. The assumed date range is based on the mutual similarities of the graves (all were simple pits with no evidence of coffins, shrouds or burial goods) and the state of skeletal preservation which was generally good. Some of these burials disrupted earlier, monastic graves. Two (Graves 21 and 22) were overlain by a spread of clay (possibly the remnants of a floor surface) within which were coins and other artefacts of late 17th-century date whereas the remainder were overlain by various disturbed, undatable deposits.

Age and sex distribution were much more diverse than within the monastic population. Three of the skeletons were of children, one of them under one year old; by contrast, on the evidence of tooth wear, only one individual had reached the age of 45 years by death. Dental disease was common, as were degenerative diseases, particularly among the older individuals.

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 OUTSIDE THE EAST RANGE
 

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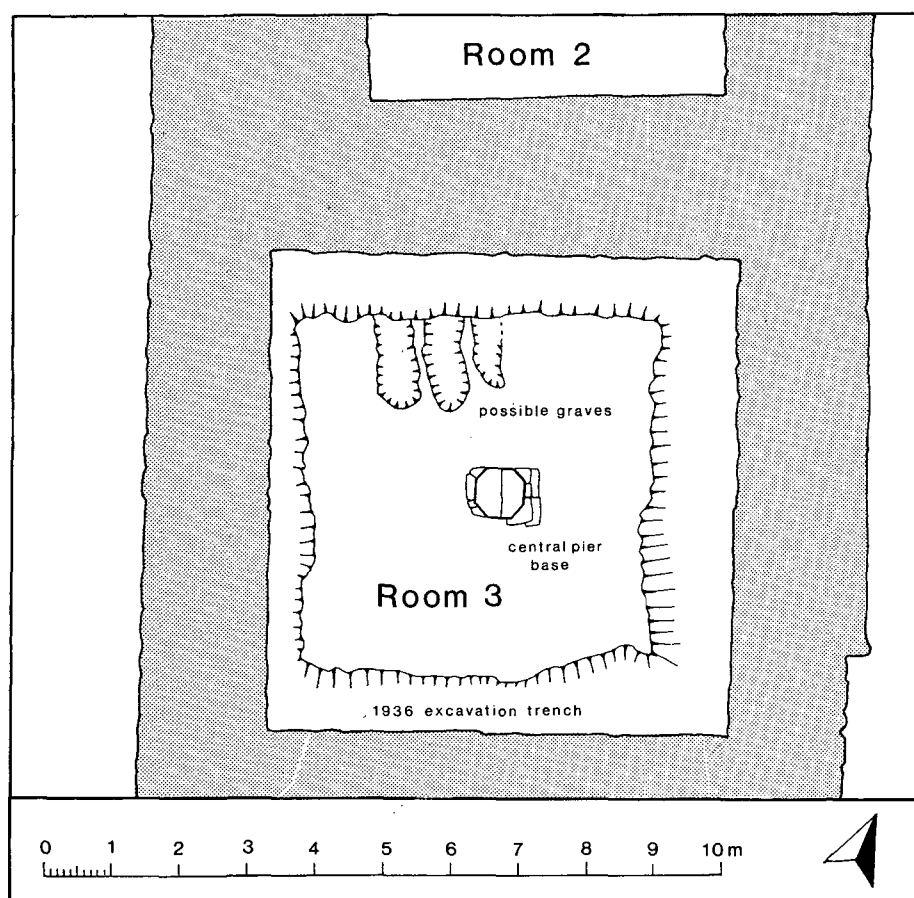
 GRAVES 21–23 & 29–40
 

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## GRAVE 21

The W end of this grave had been disturbed, leaving a shallow pit, 1.5m long and 0.45m wide. The skull, the right clavicle, the vertebrae down to and including the 10th thoracic and some of

the hand and foot bones were missing although the remainder of the skeleton was in good condition. The skeleton was of a female of estimated height 1.64m (5' 4") who died aged 20–25 years.



Illus 98  
Plan of possible post-Reformation burials, truncated by a 1930s excavation trench, in the N side of the Chapter house.

#### GRAVE 22

Only the central area of this grave pit survived. The skeletal remains comprised a few vertebrae, ribs and some miscellaneous fragments, all of them damaged. The appearance of the innominate bones suggests that the individual was male and, on the evidence of degenerative disease on the vertebrae, he was over 30 years at death.

#### GRAVE 23

This shallow pit, measuring only 0.5m × 0.3m, had evidently had been disturbed at some time. Within the pit and scattered around its periphery were the partial remains of a child, aged 1 year at death.

#### GRAVE 29

The grave was so badly disturbed that its outline was not clear and the condition of the bones was so poor that only a few could be identified as belonging to the original skeleton. It was not possible to sex the individual. On the evidence of tooth wear, death did not come until at least the age of 45.

#### GRAVE 30

The remains comprised only the vault of a skull and it is questionable whether this was the original grave or merely a displaced fragment of a skeleton. The skull was of an adult and possibly male.

#### GRAVE 31

The grave extended beyond the E limit of the trench and the skeleton below the knees remains unexcavated. The exposed

bones were in a good state of preservation and evidently belonged to a female, 1.59m (5' 2.5") tall who died at the age of 20–25.

Evidence testifying to the poor health of this young adult included tooth decay and various pathological changes to the skeleton, including porotic superior surfaces on both orbits, possibly caused by iron-deficiency anaemia.

#### GRAVE 32

Most of the grave lay beyond the trench edge, the skeleton below the pelvis remaining unexposed. The excavated bones were in good condition although many were damaged. The individual was male, approximately 1.67m (5' 6") tall and, on the evidence of tooth wear and the morphology of the pubic symphysis, aged 25–35 years at death. Many areas of the skeleton showed signs of degenerative change.

#### GRAVE 33

The outline of the grave pit was difficult to discern although it was believed to extend beyond the limit of the trench. The bones that were recovered comprised a fragmented skull, a few vertebrae and the disarticulated left arm excluding the hand bones.

Stature was impossible to estimate whereas tooth wear suggests the age at death to have been 21–25 years. The skull had masculine features whereas the width of the atlas vertebra was typically female. There was no indication of pathological change to the skeleton.

#### GRAVE 34

The lower part of the grave pit and the lower limbs of the skeleton

remained beyond the trench edge. The skeleton was clearly male, its height estimated as 1.8m (5' 10.5"). Age at death was estimated from tooth wear and from the morphology of the pubic symphysis as 21–25 years.

#### GRAVE 35

The whole of the pit, measuring 1.85m long and 0.55m wide, was exposed and almost all of the skeleton was recovered. The individual was male, approximately 1.74m (5' 8.5") tall and aged 25–35 years at death according to the evidence of the innominate bones. There was evidence of degenerative disease in many areas of the skeleton, including the elbows, knees and feet and the absence of pitting within the left orbit suggested iron-deficiency anaemia.

#### GRAVE 36

This grave, aligned approximately NW to SE, was cut into the inside face of the N wall of the Period III Chapter house. The grave pit measured 1.95m long and narrowed from 0.8m at the shoulder to 0.35m at the feet.

The skeleton, in excellent condition, was of a male, approximately 1.74m (5' 8.5") tall, who died at the age of about 25, according to the evidence of tooth wear and the morphology of the pubic symphysis. There were signs of mild degenerative disease at various points in the skeleton and there had been some pathological change, probably secondary,

caused by a traumatic incident to the left elbow.

#### GRAVE 37

This pit burial had damaged the sarcophagus of the underlying Grave 19, removing two of its capstones, but it was, in turn, disturbed by Grave 32 which removed the skeleton's lower limbs. The skeleton which was in very good condition was of a male of estimated height 1.67m (5' 5.5") who died, according to the evidence of tooth wear and the morphology of the pubic symphysis, aged 21–25 years. There were some signs of degenerative changes in some bones.

#### GRAVE 38

The only part of the skeleton to be exposed was the skull which appeared to be that of a male, aged 25–35 at death.

#### GRAVE 39

Only the W half of this grave was exposed. Within it were the skull, a few vertebrae and some other disarranged bones of a child aged approximately 4 years at death.

#### GRAVE 40

This partially excavated grave contained the fragmentary remains of a child, aged under 1 year and possibly newborn.

## WITHIN THE CHURCH

#### GRAVE 43

Lying directly over monastic Grave 42, this burial contained a coffin constructed of timber planks enclosing a box made of lead sheets, 1–2mm thick. Later disturbances had removed the lid and upper sides of the coffin although the surviving elements were quite well preserved. Overlying the coffin's timber exterior was a covering of textile (4.11 above) and sheets of copper-alloy beaten into shell-like patterns. Within the coffin was a fully articulated skeleton in an excellent state of preservation and still retaining some hair which, together with the style of the coffin, suggests a

comparatively recent (?late 18th-/19th-century) date for the burial.

On the N side of the grave was a massive dolerite boulder which had been chipped and partially cracked, either during this interment or that of the underlying Grave 42.

Within the remaining area of the trench were numerous other burials, none of which was excavated. Most, if not all of them, had been disturbed.

