

A1L2B: DEATH BURIAL AND IDENTITY: MARINE MOLLUSC REMAINS

Hannah Russ

Summary

The remains of marine molluscs were recovered from grave backfills at the Cemetery at Bainesse, and inhumation burials at Fort Bridge and Field 178 at Catterick during archaeological excavations on the A1L2B road improvement scheme. None of the marine shell remains appeared to represent purposeful inclusion in any of the graves. They, therefore, only indicate the discard of these food remains in the local vicinity prior to the interment of certain individuals in their graves. As marine taxa, they attest to communication and/or trade with the coast; this is also known from the other marine mollusc remains recovered from non-burial contexts across the scheme. They should be integrated into the data and reporting for the Establishment, Consolidation and Retreat volume, where they can be discussed in more detail alongside the marine mollusc findings from non-burial contexts.

MARINE MOLLUSC REMAINS BY FIELD AND BURIAL

F145

No marine shell was recovered from the burial contexts in F145.

BAINESSE AREA

F159A

No marine shell was recovered from burial contexts in F159A.

F163C - Bainesse Cemetery

Grave **54** contained small fragments of unidentified marine shell.

Grave **77** contained a complete fossil bivalve, still articulated. The fossil shell likely eroded from the natural geology.

Grave **122** contained the fragmentary remains of a single cockle (Cardiidae) valve.

Grave **264** contained one fragment of mussel (*Mytilus* sp.) and a number of small fragments of another marine mollusc taxon.

F163E

No marine shell was recovered from burial contexts in F163E.

CATTERICK

F172

No marine shell was recovered from burial contexts in F172.

Fort Bridge

From burial contexts:

Three of the four graves at Fort Bridge contained marine shell remains in their backfill, all of which represented mussel (*Mytilus* sp.). The only grave without shell remains was a cremation.

Grave **21162** at Fort Bridge contained 12 small fragments of mussel shell.

Grave **21904** at Fort Bridge contained 18 small fragments of mussel shell.

Grave **18024** at Fort Bridge contained 30 small fragments of mussel shell.

From contexts associated with disarticulated remains:

18275 contained 12 fragments of mussel (*Mytilus* sp.) shell; nine were in very fresh condition and re-fitted to form part of one valve. The other three fragments were heavily abraded and likely represent a different specimen.

F177/178

Grave **20532** in F178 contained a fossil marine shell of the family Cardiidae (cockle) and two small fragments of non-fossil unidentified shell, probably of marine origin. The fossil shell likely eroded from the natural geology.

F174, F176 and F179

No marine shell was recovered from burial contexts in F174, 176 or F179.

F261 LOW STREET

The molluscs recovered from Grave **7181** represented only terrestrial taxa.

SCOTCH CORNER

F228

The molluscs recovered from Grave **27673** represented only terrestrial taxa.

F258 and F265

No marine mollusc remains were recovered from burial contexts in F258 or F265.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

The remains of marine molluscs were recovered from grave backfills at the Cemetery at Bainesse, and inhumation burials at Fort Bridge and Field 178 at Catterick. None of the marine shell remains appeared to represent purposeful inclusion in any of the graves. They, therefore, only indicate the discard of these food remains in the local vicinity prior to the interment of certain individuals in their graves. As marine taxa, they attest to communication and/or trade with the coast; this is also known from the other marine mollusc remains recovered from non-burial contexts across the scheme. They should be integrated into the data and reporting for the Establishment, Consolidation and Retreat volume, where they can be discussed in more detail with the marine mollusc findings from non-burial contexts. Once recorded and reported on, the marine shell from grave backfills may be discarded.