Report assessing the significance of the Late Roman burial group found in Trench 1 at Marcham, in the light of local, regional and national parallels for Roman burials on or near temple sites in Britain

Kate Elizabeth Barrett

Excavations at Marcham have occurred each summer since 2001 to present, and are undertaken by the University of Oxford through the Archaeological Field School program. The site at Marcham has proven to be a complex area of settlement and ritual activity spanning from the Late Prehistoric period, through the Romano-British period, to at least the 5th century AD. Marcham/ Frilford is an unusual site as its type is well known in Gaul, but not represented very clearly in Britain (Hingley, 1985:201, 208), and this issue will be discussed further within the following report. During the excavations of 2004 and 2005, the skeletal remains of at least 25 individuals were unexpectedly recovered from Trench 1 (Levick, Unpublished 2008:1). Within this number, a group of seven mostly articulated Romano-British burials were identified and recorded adjacent to the semi-amphitheatre feature on the site, and some way away from a larger cemetery containing Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon burials excavated in the 19th and 20th century.

The aims of this report are threefold; firstly documents referring to previous excavations of the area will be discussed. This will provide a context in which the remains of the seven individuals excavated in 2004-2005 will be assessed for their relationship to the larger cemetery group and the rest of the site. The second aim of this report is to compare these burials at Marcham in a general sense on a regional scale with other Romano-British temple and shrine sites. Thirdly national comparisons will be considered in regards to burial practice in 4th century cemeteries in Britain in general, with reference to temple and shrines relating to cemeteries. For further information regarding the modern excavations' details of this site, please refer to the annual interim reports of 2001 to present, and also the historical information found in the References list of this paper.

Results of excavations of the large Frilford/Marcham cemetery group in the 19th and 20th centuries:

The work of previous excavations from the 19th century through to present have proved the presence of a Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon cemetery to the north west of the present Marcham/ Frilford site examined by the University of Oxford (Akerman, 1865; Buxton, 1921: Rolleston, 1868; Rolleston, 1875; Bradford & Goodchild, 1939), on the site of an old disused limestone quarry adjacent to the A338. Local tradition also serves to confirm the discoveries, with 'Trendles' Field being recognised as a haunted area (Rolleston, 1868:418), and the place name 'Frilford' stemming from 'Freya' the Norse Goddess of love, beauty and fertility (Ashworth, 2006:24). It is clear therefore that the examined area of Frilford was recognised locally as a place of importance for the deceased, resonating over a multitude of periods and cultures. Below, I will briefly summarise the results of the previous excavations as they have some bearing on the current understanding of Marcham/ Frilford area.

The earliest known excavations were carried out by Akerman (1865), where at the time he described "*...workmen have met with several graves, some of which contained relics; but according to their account, the greater part skeletons only...*" (Akerman,1865:136). With permission from the owner of the land, William Aldworth Esq., Akerman set about laying two trenches, one from the south to the north and another a little way off from the first and parallel with it. The 38 interments varied in respect of the grave goods found within them, which included items such as; a gilded brooch, a pair of saucer shaped fibulae ornamented in the pagan style, a bronze girdle, an 'excellently' made Anglo-Saxon umbo (central boss of a

shield), several small brass coins of the lower empire, Romano-British pottery and a coin depicting Constantine. Akerman argued, "*…the greater part of these graves held the remains of converted or half-converted Anglo-Saxons…*" excepting the two lead coffin burials which he speculated to be Romano-British, one of which had a small coin of Constantine apparently placed on the forehead (1865:138). He based his argument on the idea that the later Anglo-Saxons were Christianised people who would not have used grave goods, and only those earlier Romano-British inhabitants of the area with Pagan backgrounds would have done so, concluding with, "…C*hristianity … seems to have warred successfully against the practice of heathenism*..." (1865:139).

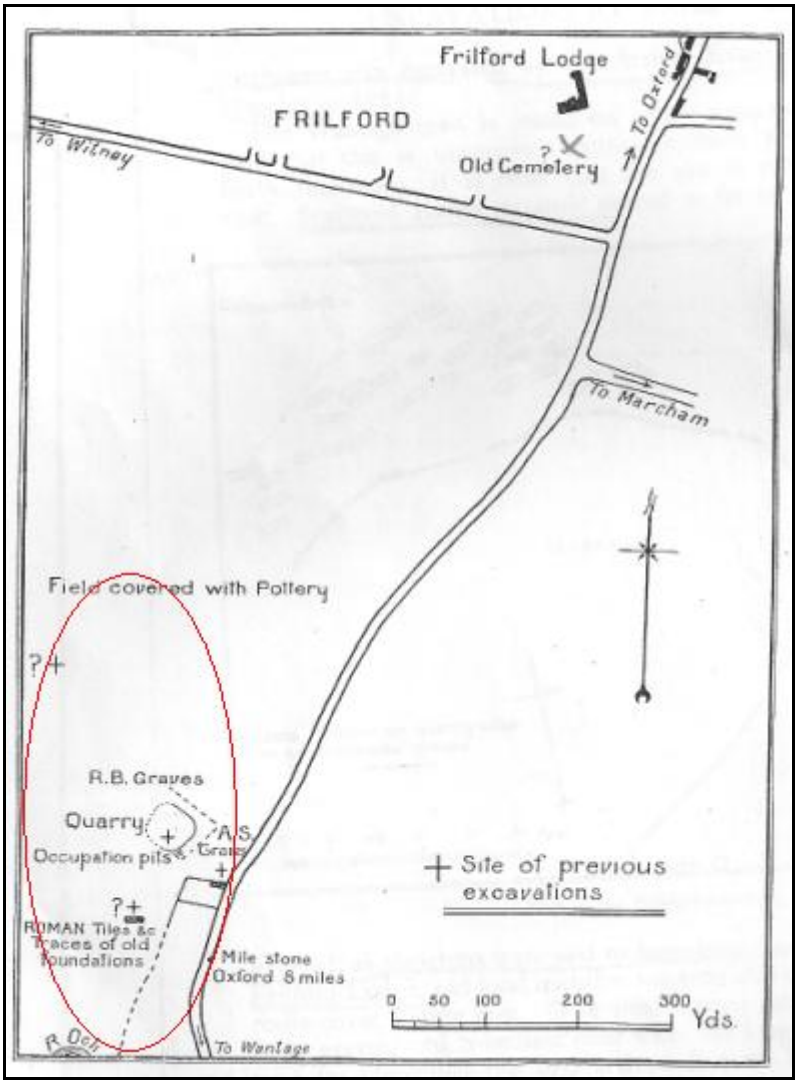


Figure 1: Map adapted from Buxton (1921:88). The red ring indicates the area of earlier excavations (Akerman, 1865; Buxton, 1921: Rolleston, 1868; Rolleston, 1875; Bradford & Goodchild, 1939).

Rolleston's work (1868 and 1875) serves as a continuation of the excavations undertaken by Akerman, although he believed that the majority of the remains marked a 'Pagan Saxondom' era of occupation given the Anglo-Saxon cremation urns of half calcined human bone containing 'relics', and shallow burials without reference to the cardinal points which sometimes disturbed earlier Romano-British burials.(1868:418-419). Rolleston goes in to great detail on the nature of the Roman interments, which he identified through their positioning at a lower level, their West-East alignment and by the occasional use of packing stones (1868:420). In total, Rolleston excavated 123 individuals of which he confirmed

approximately 27 were Romano-British and 18 thought to have been Anglo-Saxon – although these conclusions are based entirely on the analysis of the skulls representing 'racial' differences (Craniology) and so cannot be trusted.

All of the Romano-British burials noted by Rolleston were extended at full length and more or less oriented West-East, with some deviation to the South implying a high proportion of winter deaths - as the position of the sun shifts slightly each winter season which would have had implications on the aligning of the burial cut moving slightly southwards. Two of the interments were within leaden coffins and two in wooden, all near to each other bearing ESE and approximately five feet below ground level. The leaden coffins measured 6ft4'x1ft6' though were crushed by the overlying sediments, stiffened and oxidised red over time. The lids appear to have been unsoldered, and a wooden outer shell is likely to have existed for both, evidenced by the association of large square headed nails, characteristic in style of the Gallo-Roman period. Each coffin contained the remains of what Rolleston referred to as a 'strong man' past the 'middle period of life', with the bodily 'inclemancies' expected of a soldier, and being unusually tall for the Roman period at six feet. One of the individuals were interred with five coins, depicting Constantine the Younger, Valens and Gratian (1868:422) (see Figure 5), safely dating the deaths to have occurred no earlier then the end of the Roman occupation of Britain in the late fourth century, when the definitions of Christian and Pagan burial practice were not clear cut. Rolleston speculates that the individuals must have been persons of 'distinction' in life to warrant the expense and effort gone into burying them in death.

Romano-British burials not interred in leaden coffins constituted the majority of remains found by Rolleston. These remains occupied regimented parallel rows of grave cuts (proving some degree of organisation and planning), some within wooden coffins and some without, bearing ESE implying mostly winter burials once more. The contexts in which the burials were discovered contained evidence of animal bone and teeth, charcoal, oyster shells, pottery sherds, flints, nails and woody fibre, with some examples of 4th century coins (1865:422). Rolleston uses a three point list to determine the differences between Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon burials (1865:430). However this list is often contradictory to the 'facts' used within his arguments, and cannot be definitive as the practices of burial during the transitional periods from the end of the Roman occupation to the beginnings of the Saxon takeover are not uniform or transcribed from a single belief system. However, it is clear that the late Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon burials within the cemetery were not simultaneous, as in May 23rd 1870 he excavated the remains of an Anglo-Saxon female found directly above the skeleton of a Romano-British individual, implying that sufficient time had lapsed between the two internments for the earliest to have been forgotten by the local population (1875:407).

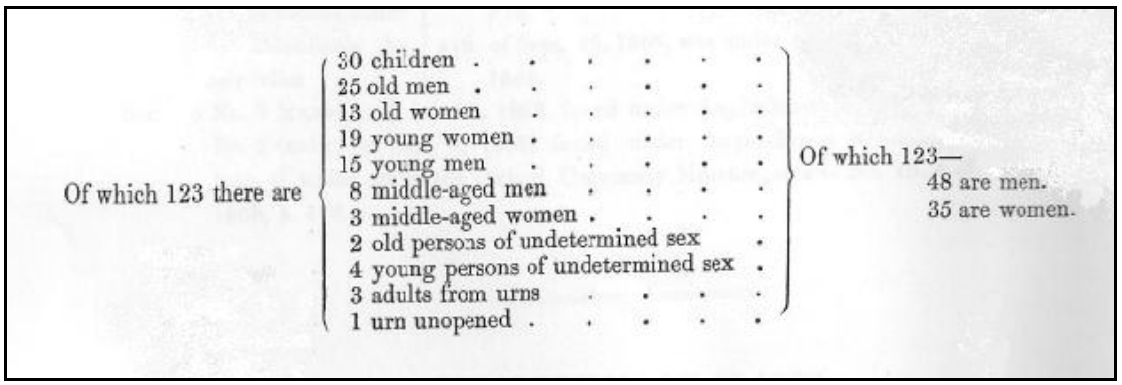

Of which 123 there are
30 children
25 old men
13 old women
19 young women
15 young men
8 middle-aged men
3 middle-aged women
2 old persons of undetermined sex
4 young persons of undetermined sex
3 adults from urns
1 urn unopened
Of which 123—
48 are men.
35 are women.

Figure 2: Table of remains taken from the *Catalogue of Frilford Excavations* (Rolleston, 1868: 480).

The conclusions reached by Rolleston from the examination of the human remains are somewhat outdated by today's methods. For example, Rolleston argues that social and moral peculiarities of the conquered and the conquering 'races' may be gathered from the

physical differences of their bones and the study of Craniology, and that these differences were exaggerated by the isolated nature of the site (1868:443, 450,465) – therefore it is wise to approach the discussion by Rolleston with a level of caution. However, the factual records of the remains do provide information which can be worked with. Between 1864 and 1868 (therefore including the remains excavated by Akerman), a representative sample of 123 individuals were collected in the form of cremations or burials, five sixths of which were aged and sexed (see Figure 2). Rolleston identified from this group that there were a minimum of 27 Romano-British individuals and 18 Anglo-Saxon (1868:466-480), although these were assessed using methods of Craniology, therefore casting an air of unreliability over these figures – Rolleston made no attempt to date the majority of the remaining 78 burials as either Romano-British or Anglo-Saxon. There were a large proportion of older individuals, with the Romano-British appearing to live longer than the Anglo-Saxon population (1868:445). There was a greater preponderance of male skeletons (48 confirmed) who were taller than the female population (1868:456), although the presence of 35 female skeletons proved that the area was not a site of use consistent with male dominated places such as a monastery, prison or barracks. Thirty of the individuals were confirmed as being children (below 14 years) although it is known that the remains of the young can decompose more quickly than the more robust bones of adults, so there may have been more than initially thought.

The sample group by Rolleston (1868, 1875) cannot be an exact or true representation of the population of the area. Even if had Rolleston provided full details of the entire excavated sample group of 123 remains, the number of remains potentially lost to earlier quarrying cannot be calculated. Therefore it is clear that there is not a complete cemetery group to study, and inferences stemming from it cannot be representative of the truth. Also, the entirety of the cemetery boundaries have not yet been defined or excavated, so further investigation of this area may provide even more examples of human remains.

The next excavation of this area undertaken by Buxton in 1920 considered at least 40 more burials, although it is not made clear exactly how many of these were Romano-British. Buxton noted the interments were scattered as far as the village of Frilford, following the local tradition that the cemetery covered a vast area. The North West side of the cemetery contained only Romano-British graves (with one exception), and the Anglo-Saxon burials were contained in the South-East area only (1921:90). The Romano-British graves were cut in the ground at a depth of 0.3m for adults, with children's graves and those of women being slightly shallower. The shallowness of these burials may be due to several reasons; perhaps the social ladder of the Romano-British community dictated these differences, the ground in this area was extremely hardened terrain and difficult to dig, natural upper level sedimentary movement occurred after the burials took place, or modern ploughing techniques levelled the land to a lower position. The orientation of the interments was West-East with some deviating to the South, showing deaths occurring in the winter months. The deceased appear to have been laid in regimented rows, proving some degree of organisation within the cemetery area. On average, dimensions of the grave cuts were 1.65m x 0.5m for females, and 1.85m x 0.5m, which implies that sexual dimorphism was greater during the Romano-British period than today and matches the reports put forward by Rolleston (1868:456).

Buxton discusses that at a later date in the existence of the cemetery, older burials appeared to have been disturbed to make way for later ones, with the earlier remains being carefully replaced (1921:90, 96) – this implies that the cemetery was used over several generations, who either over time lost track of the burials which had already occurred, or a new community had taken over the site (possibly the Anglo-Saxons). The presence of a Romano-British occupation site is suggested, with evidence of reddened earthen pits, pottery pieces, and horse remains probably representing rubbish pits (Buxton, 1921:92), and an area upon which the Anglo-Saxon part of the cemetery was later placed. This could show the gradual change of use of the landscape over time, although modern archaeological investigations would usually expect greater evidence than rubbish pits to assume the previous existence of an occupation site, so this assumption by Buxton should be approached carefully.

Similar to the findings of Rolleston, the interments did not all have coffins (assumed by the presence/ lack of nails), some used packing stones and others did not show evidence

for a container at all. Grave 38 appeared not even to have a grave cut, and instead the remains were placed in to a plough cut, with a coin in the mouth (1921:91). It is noted that Roman coins were found in association with some of the remains, with pottery sherds being less frequent in the Romano-British burials than the Saxon ones, implying they were Christianised peoples. The skeletons themselves were all in an extended position, lying on their backs, some with stone 'pillows' (Buxton 1921:91). Like the remains found in the 2004-2005 excavations, the arms and hands were often placed differently (discussed later within this paper).

The findings of Bradford and Goodchild in their 1937excavations (1939) focussed upon a part of the area still undergoing excavation today adjacent to the Noah's Ark Inn, (the temple and temenos area) which they categorised in to three parts (1939:3) (see Figure 3):

A) An area nearest to the Inn, a Romano-Celtic Temple with secondary annexes and a large Iron Age hut in the Northwest corner.
B) A narrow excavation trench down the western margin of the field behind the Inn, being representative area of the centre of an Iron Age Village site.
C) Two superimposed circular ritual structures, firstly used in the Iron Age and continued in to the Roman era (this is Trench 1 in the present day excavations and the focus of this paper.)

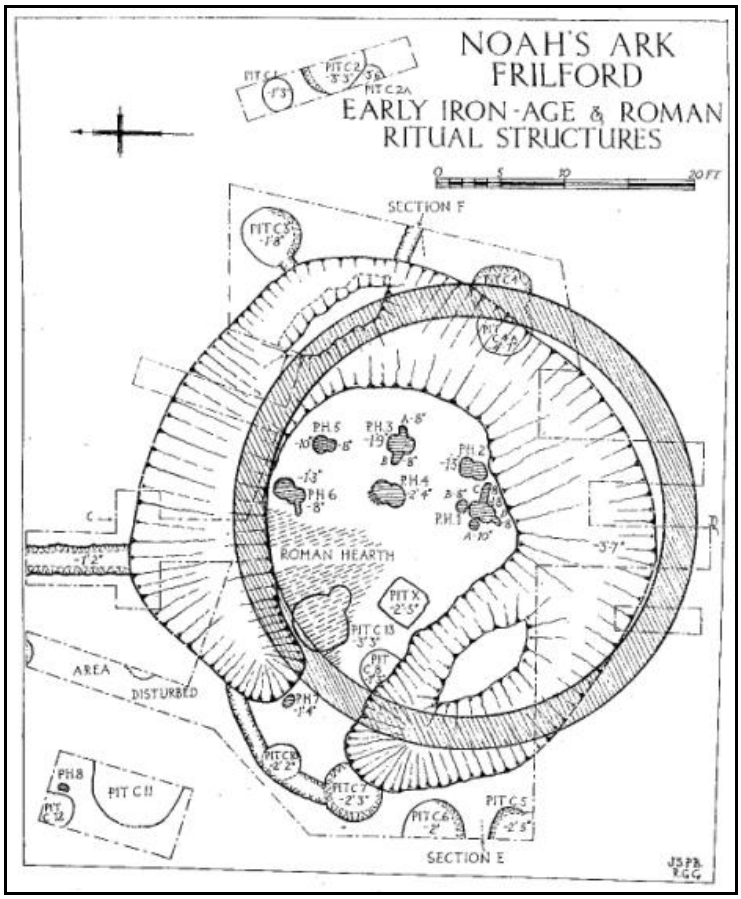


Figure 3: 'Site C' (Bradford and Goodchild, 1939:12).

However, Bradford and Goodchild also looked at the place to the north of the cemetery area already excavated by Akerman (1865), Rolleston (1868, 1875) and Buxton (1921), although limits on transportation and hours of work prevented a thorough investigation. From a series of trenches 100ft x5ft, six Romano-British graves were discovered, as well as the assumed northern limit of the cemetery, where occupational

material was unearthed (see Figure 4, area outlined in red). The graves were of a simple type, oriented WNW to ESE, with the human remains greatly deteriorated due to shallow burial conditions, plough damage, weather erosion and plant root involvement. Burial 1 and 2, of a male adult and young male adult respectively, were found lying side by side with Burial 1's head turned to face Burial 2, with a hoard of 34 coins dating to AD440 (Bradford and Goodchild, 1939:56). This confirms the continued use of the cemetery in to the 5th century. Burials 4, 5, and 6, were also all male, with burial 6 being furthest from the rest and lined with limestone slabs down to the knee (similar to MF04 SK14 – see Appendix: v). Burial 6 was the most rich in grave goods including; pot sherds, decorated glass fragments, a bronze pin, bronze wire, an iron pin, lead fragments and seven late 4th century coins. Bradford and Goodchild state that it is clear that the cemetery had multiple phases of use, as disarticulated human remains were littered throughout the site.

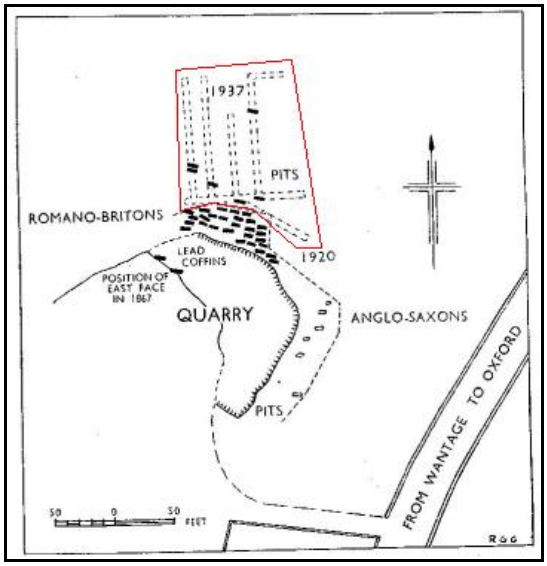


Figure 4: General plan correlating the discoveries from 1867-1937, with the area excavated by Bradford and Goodchild outlined in red with the burials discovered clearly marked. (Adapted from Bradford and Goodchild, 1939:55).

As the 1937 excavations at Frilford came to a close, Bradford and Goodchild noted there were some difficulties inherent in any attempt to fully analyse the site. The extent of the cemetery was not yet fully understood, although excavations to the west might solve this, Also, Rolleston's excavation did not create any plans as to where each burial was discovered, so only a limited spatial analysis could be made of his work, and quarrying has likely destroyed a key area of the site. Therefore the Romano-British to Anglo-Saxon transition period is still not clear (1939:66).

However, some conclusions were drawn by Bradford and Goodchild (1939:67-69) which can be outlined as: the temple site had been continuously occupied since 350BC and by the end of the first century AD the site was primarily used for ritual acts when the temple and rotunda were created. This is unusual for a rural area, as well as the time period, as often Roman temple sites in Britain are not known to have come in to being until the later phases of Roman occupation. Bradford and Goodchild suggest that the cemetery was not in use before the 4th century, and there is no evidence to prove or disprove contemporaneous use between Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of the area. They also argue that the cemetery can reflect the proportions of these two social levels (only 5 leaden coffins and over 90 uncoffined at the time of publication from all excavations to 1939) though there is simply not enough data to support a theory of this nature here. They also speculated that there were two main reasons for importance of Frilford site – firstly, its Iron Age history and the probably already locally recognised religious importance of the site, and secondly that the road now

known as the A338 was a link crossing the entire Vale from North-East to South-West (1939: 25-26).

Conclusions - Previous Excavations:

It is clear that conclusions regarding the burials within the cemetery, and the ideas concerning the purpose of the arena structure revealed on the current excavated temple site have varied throughout the numerous excavations at the Marcham/ Frilford site. However, it is important that current archaeological investigations in this area take note of the past. The factual information provided from these previous excavations can be utilised alongside new findings. However all of the information gleaned from these documents must be assessed carefully as the analytical methodologies of the time do not match those utilised today. The records provided may also be incomplete or omit information which today may be reviewed with greater care, and the multiple excavations upon one small area are likely to have disturbed the archaeology of the site to some degree, which may have affected the results of all subsequent excavations.

From the previous excavations of the main cemetery site, it can be calculated that the minimum number of burials discovered in all of them was 169, although some have suggested that up to 359 graves were uncovered (Hingley, 1985:208), with up to 35 of those being speculated as representing Romano-British burials, with no Romano British cremations. However, the majority of these burials were assessed by Rolleston who used Craniology to determine the differences between Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon remains, and therefore even these results are not reliable in modern archaeological terms.

In regards to the grave goods found associated with remains during the excavations 1865 to 1921, the records are not clear. Although descriptions are provided of the objects themselves, the relationships to the remains in a spatial context (or the spatial positions of the burials within the area of excavation) are not patently discussed, therefore it cannot be assured that any of the finds were directly associated with the burials, except perhaps for the instance where a Roman coin was found placed on the forehead of an individual (Akerman, 1865:138). However, the majority of the finds suggest clear continuous use of the site in the 4th century, most diagnostically indicated by the coins which were discovered in both the cemetery area and the entire site surveyed by Bradford and Goodchild (see Figure 5 overleaf).

Figure 5 lists the coin deposition at the Marcham/Frilford cemetery site as excavated between 1865 and 1939, and clearly shows that there was much activity in the area during the 4th century, at the transitional period of Roman Britain changing to an Anglo-Saxon Britain. Rahtz and White (1979: 193) include the idea of coin deposition playing a heavy part in ritual ceremony – an idea which runs parallel with coin evidence of all early excavations, as well as 4th/5th century finds on the University of Oxford main temple site excavations of 2001-2009.

	Number of coins found / by as set out in the respective reports:				**Total:**
Principal rulers and their dates of circulation ranges (as set out by Casey, 1980:29):	**Akerman (1865)**	**Rolleston (1868, 1875)**	**Buxton (1921)**	**Bradford & Goodchild (1939)**	**Combined:**
Crispus AD317-26		-	1		**1**
Constantine AD317-48	2	2	-	18	**22**
Constans AD330-48		2	1	15	**18**
Magnentius AD348-64		-	1		**1**
Valens AD364-78		2	-	33	**35**
Gratian AD378-88		1	-	3	**4**
Theodosius AD388-402				11	**11**
Others / unknown date	'Several Early Empire' (1865:137)	11	'Some' (1921:91)	70	**81+**
					Total 173+

Figure 5: Table representing Coins found during Excavation 1865-1939 at the site of Marcham/Frilford

The Romano-British burials investigated during the excavations outlined above do not provide clearly defined records for each individual inhumation, and instead give wordy descriptions which were in line with the writing of the day, but unfortunately are not appropriate for today's examination. However, what can be gleaned from these records is that the burials were not all carried out in the same way, and the positions in which the skeletons were laid can vary greatly. For example, each excavation describes some instances of the placing of stones to line part of the grave cut, with the remains usually not being placed in a coffin, and the majority of them were oriented West-East with the feet pointing towards the East – but how many of these were definitely late Roman rather than Anglo-Saxon is unfortunately not made clear. The majority of the interments were extended in the supine position, however the position of the arms varied. Buxton states that in some cases the remains he excavated appeared to have stone 'pillows', and that the hands were arranged thus; nine interments had both hands by their sides; five interments had the left hand at their side with the right forearm flexed and hand over pelvis; four had the right hand at the side with the left forearm and hand flexed over the pelvis; and six interments had both hands flexed over their pelvis (1921:91).

Bradford and Goodchild (1939:56-57) described one of their six Romano-British burials as having the arms flexed, both hands over the sacrum; one with both arms to the side of the remains; one with the left arm flexed and hand above sacrum with the right arm flexed hand resting on hip; and one with the right arm to the side with the left forearm flexed and hand resting on pelvis. Rolleston mentions one example of a prone burial, of a male interred with a knife, two pieces of iron and a coin probably from the Anglo-Saxon period- although Rolleston does not explain how he came to his conclusion on the date, and suggests the reason for the male being buried 'face down' was that he was, *"...probably buried when bearers drunk..."* (1868:477).

These differences between interments reflect the lack of clear single religious direction, and have many similarities to the remains excavated in the 2001-2009 excavations by the University of Oxford which shall be discussed later in this report.

Results of excavations of the temple site burial group from the 2001-2009 excavations:

The modern series of excavations running from 2001 to present have investigated the area to the south-east of the A338, diagonally opposite the larger cemetery group found in the quarry area excavated by Akerman (1865), Buxton (1921), Rolleston (1868, 1875) and Bradford & Goodchild (1939). This area contains the remains of a Romano-British temple and related shrine (also excavated by Bradford and Goodchild, 1939), a semi-amphitheatre structure, and an unusual drainage system.

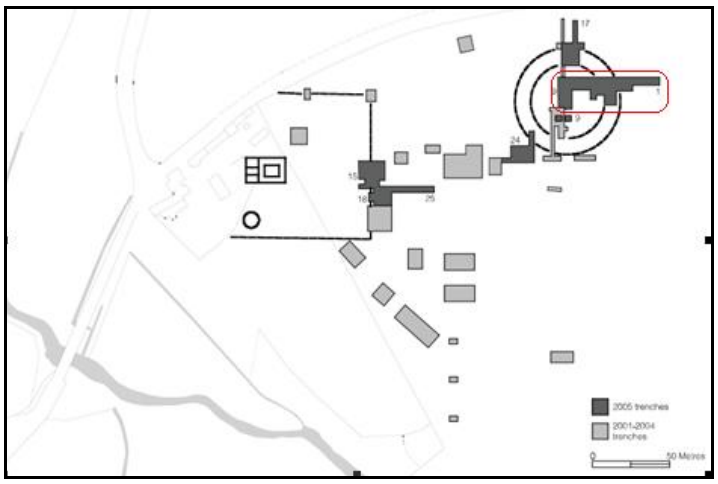


Figure 6: Excavation trenches at Marcham/ Frilford from 2001-2005 with Trench 1 in 2005 encircled in red (Image taken and adapted from Lock et al 2006:56).

The 2001 season saw the opening of Trench 1, located at the eastern entrance to what the current researchers refer to as the semi-amphitheatre (see Figure 6). The trench runs through a two meter wide break in the bank, extending east and fanning outwards beyond the wall. This break has been interpreted as a possible entrance or viewing point in to the arena, and evidence suggests that the configuration of the bank went through several phases (Gosden et al, 2004:2005). Later remodelling of the banked enclosure has destroyed evidence for the earliest phases of use, and the sandy nature of the soil, along with the lack of structural deposits, have failed to preserve any cuts or negative features. Contexts associated with the final stages of use have included several late 4th century coins.

The 2004 excavation season unexpectedly recovered six complete adult skeletons towards the eastern area of Trench 1, those being SK3, SK4, SK8, SK13, SK14 and SK16 (see Figure 7 and Appendix 1:i-vi). In 2005, the remains of another individual, SK17 (see Appendix 1:vii), were discovered also. The remains of all individuals were aligned East-West, but unfortunately there was very little dating evidence due to a lack of associated grave goods. The majority of the skeletons were dug in to the bank of the semi-amphitheatre. It has been suggested that the burials here are of Romano-British Christians due to the lack of grave goods, as well as having the East-West alignment (Gosden et al, 2005:102). Later, Radio-Carbon analysis performed on bone samples from SK8 and SK13 confirmed the excavator's theory that the burials date to the 4th century AD (Levick, Unpublished).

The 2005 excavations proved slightly more fruitful in terms of finds in the area surrounding the remains. Thirty late Roman coins, pottery sherds, animal bones, vessel glass, hair pins, decorative studs, fittings and rings were found scattered in the eastern area of Trench 1 (Lock et al, 2006:63), but unfortunately none of these finds can be directly associated with any of the remains and the majority of them do not provide clear diagnostic indicators for dates. However, the deposition of these objects, which could be argued to represent votive offerings, prove the area near to the semi-amphitheatre was still in use to the late 4th century at least, possibly as a designated ritual area. Lock et al (2006:63) consider that the scattered nature of the objects and the variability in their worth implies that the worship was not formally prescribed or led, and this behaviour might reflect a reaction to the attempted introduction of Christianity in the late Roman period.

The extent of the burial area was unknown at the end of the 2004 excavation season, and therefore an extension to the south in Trench 1 was carried out in 2005. The outcome of the investigation suggests that the burial area does not extend further in any direction from its current position (Lock et al, 2006:64). Clear grave cuts were visible for only the graves of SK8 and SK16, where the interments occurred one on top of the other (SK8 directly above SK16) (See Appendix 1:iii and vi respectively). The remaining three burials showed only faint grave cuts, excepting SK14 which had stone markers around the head and feet (see Appendix 1:v). All graves were cut in to the earth to an extremely shallow depth, with the possibility that SK3 was laid directly on to the gravel/ bedrock.

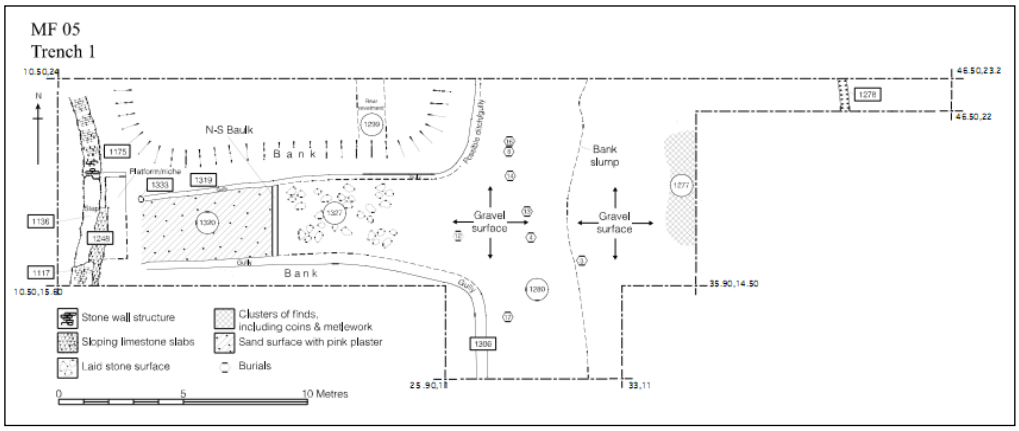


Figure 7: A schematic interpretive plan of Trench 1 following the 2005 excavation season. See burials right of centre in the image denoted by hexagons. (Image taken from Lock et al, 2006:63).

The stratigraphy phasing of Trench 1 has been difficult to determine due to the geological nature of the area and the extreme shallowness of the topsoil, a problem which also might explain the unclear nature of the burial cuts (Locke et al, 2006:64). The natural movement of topsoil down the slope from the east, and the gradual levelling of the land through ploughing may explain why the burials appear so shallow, as well as why some remains are so damaged and dispersed.

Interment and Remains Discussion

For a full report of each skeleton please refer to Appendix 1. The below discussions will concentrate on various aspects of the style of interment, the position of the mostly articulated remains, the possible associated grave goods and their potential religious implications. All of the interments were oriented West-East, though none of them suggested evidence of the use of coffins, instead the deceased were probably placed directly in to the ground (Levick, Unpublished, 2008:1). All remains showed evidence of possibly being bound in a shroud at the time of burial, with the remains being kept fairly articulated and the feet showing evidence of being held together and pointing flat (except SK3). However no shroud pins were excavated (Gosden et al 2005;101). The remains of an infant skull (SK12) were also found within this area although the bone was discovered out of context, disarticulated, and very poorly preserved; therefore it is not discussed in any further detail in this report.

The positions of the skeletons each differed from each other, especially in regards to the position of their arms (See images within Appendix 1:i-vii). This has raised many questions, as body positioning may be a means of marking differences between or within social groups (Pearson, 2003:54). The remains of SK3, an adult male, were found in a supine position with the lower body twisted to the right with the feet apart, which may suggest the remains were not placed in a shroud before burial. The upper body was badly damaged during excavations by the JCB which destroyed the sternum and most of the rib cage, with the skull being retrieved from the digger bucket in a poor condition. However, the positions of the arms were still clear, with the right arm lying by the side of the body with its hand resting over the centre of the pelvis. The left arm was found in a very different position being bent at the elbow and tucked right upwards so the left hand is resting on the left shoulder. There is no obvious religious reasoning for this, though explanations for this include rigamortis setting the arm in the position before burial, or accidental positioning of this nature when/ if the remains were wrapped in a shroud, or if the body was loosely thrown in to the burial cut (which may also explain why the remains are twisted and the feet are apart). The latter may also reflect being socially outcast or being disrespected by those burying the individual. These remains had the most possibly associated small finds; a small fragment of vessel glass, pottery under the left heel bone and a metal fragment possibly of copper alloy – but without a clearly defined grave cut, the context of such finds is insecure.

SK4, an adult of undetermined sex, lost most of the right side of the skeleton due to JCB damage and was found in the supine position. The right hand had been placed over the left side of the pelvis, with the left arm bent at the elbow and the left hand (missing) would have lain over the stomach area. The feet were found together and pointed flat implying the remains were interred in a shroud, which may account for the slightly unbalanced hand positions also. No small finds were found in relation to the remains. It has also been noted that the dental attrition was severe for this individual, and extreme periodontal disease had cost them many teeth prior to death, possibly due to work activities, which may imply the remains are that of a lowly member of the community.

The adult of indeterminate sex referred to as SK8 was almost fully complete when excavated, with only a small part of the left torso area missing due to JCB activity. These remains were later discovered to lie directly above SK16, but this will be discussed in further detail later. The image of SK8 (Appendix 1:iii) is the most shocking of all of the remains discussed within this report, as the right arm is bent at the elbow to have the right hand apparently clasped around the throat area, above which the mandible can be seen to have dropped open making the scene extremely eerie in nature. The left arm lies just off from the left side, with the hand bones partially disarticulated. The feet are not close together and are

not extremely flat to the ground, implying that a shroud may not have been used in this instance. An explanation for this position is difficult to create, though it may be the result of instances which were outlined as potential reasons for the position of SK3 (rigamortis, accidental burial position, remains without a shroud loosely thrown in to pit etc), or it may represent something more sinister. A large piece of Oxfordshire Red Colour Coat pottery (known to date from late 3rd century to the 4th century (Ravens, pers comms) was discovered in the soil within the mouth cavity, but it is difficult to say whether it was placed there purposefully at the time of interment, or arrived through natural processes over time.

The remains of SK13 were found to be in the prone position, extended with the left arm to its side, and with much of the right torso and arm bones missing as well as the skull. The use of the prone position has been viewed by some Romano-British researchers as an indication that the individual was somehow outcast from society, possibly a criminal or a deviant (Woodward, 1992:94). Mattingly (2007:479) states that in managed cemeteries (which the main Marcham/ Frilford cemetery site has proven to be), it was often the case that prone burials and decapitation burials tend to be located on the fringes, again suggesting that those persons were outcasts or undesirables. However, it may also be argued that if SK13 was buried in a shroud, those who interred the body could have mistakenly placed it in the grave upside-down without realising their actions– especially if the deposition took place in a hurried manner, which the shallowness of the grave may also imply if it does not reflect natural soil movement or plough levelling (a similar situation to the remains of one male excavated by Rolleston (1868:477).

SK14 was extremely decayed, and was tentatively assessed as being the remains of an elderly woman. As can be seen from the images of the excavation (Appendix 1:v) the few remaining bones appear to be in the supine extended position, with the estimated area of the feet (not present) having packing stones around them, as well as the head which appeared to be slightly disarticulated, probably due to natural post interment occurrences. A single copper alloy coin was found in possible association with this burial. Similar burials had been outlined in the work of Rolleston (1868:420), who believed them to have been representative of Romano-British burials, also backing the current idea that all of the Trench 1 interments from the temple site discussed within this paper derive from the mid to late 4th century before the arrival/ settlement of the Saxons.

The adult female SK16 lacked the entire torso, with only the feet, legs, pelvis, L3, L2, L1 vertebrae, sacrum, C2, C1 vertebrae and skull being excavated. At first this interment is strikingly unusual in appearance, though further consideration explains its state as being due to rather mundane and practical reasons. These remains are likely to have been disturbed during the interment of SK8 at a later period in time, which may explain the reason for the missing bone elements. This may imply that a sufficient amount of time must have passed between interments for SK16 to have been forgotten. The disruption of SK16 does not correspond with the idea of a purposeful interment of the remains together as the people burying would have proceeded with greater caution had they known SK16 was there already. Unusually, a small pig bone was found near to the lower right leg of SK16, as well as numerous rodent bones in the chest cavity area (an unfortunate scavenger in all likelihood), although no notable small finds were discovered in association to this interment except reddish sediment around the feet which could be due to rust. At the time of excavation it was considered that this individual may have been beheaded, a common late Roman pagan rite on Oxfordshire and the surrounding counties (Henig & Booth, 2000:185; Mattingly, 2007:479) – but without the required vertebrae it is not possible to confirm this. It would also be unusual for a potentially 'pagan' interment to be intermingled with the rest of the otherwise likely Christian interments.

SK17 was the only burial to be excavated in the 2005 season, and is believed to represent a male adult despite the burial being extremely disturbed and disarticulated (see images Appendix 1:vii). It is impossible to only speculate in the original positioning of these remains, and no significant small finds were found in association with them. However, given the proximity of SK17 to the rest of the interments outlined within this paper, and their

unusual placement and a discreet group away from the main cemetery to the North-West, it has been included in the discussion.

The social implications of the above outlined burial details are unfortunately difficult to consider fully, as the present understanding of burial practice during the 4th century is still not clear. The religious background of the interred is difficult to assess, the lack of grave goods in the majority of the interments and their orientation implies they are unlikely to be Pagan. The shallow depth at which they may have been interred, the lack of child or infant remains, and the presence of possibly associated grave goods imply that they could be Pagan burials. Interestingly, the interments which possibly included possible grave goods were the ones with the most unusual interment positions (SK3, SK8, and SK14) compared to what would be expected of Christian burial with more sober hand/ arm positions and no grave goods. However, it must be remembered that there is not a single example of a definite associated grave good with any of these burials. From this it could be argued that two forms of belief systems and worship were running alongside each other within the same ritual area – although it is impossible to confirm how closely contemporaneous the burials were, and it may be a case of coincidence.

Site Use Continuity and the Transition to Christianity – The Impact at Marcham/ Frilford:

Many researchers of this period note that the manner in which the Roman occupiers attempted to introduce Christianity to the British Isles was performed in a non-aggressive way (Ghey, 2007:27; Haeussler & King, 2007:8; Thomas, 1985:239; Petts, 2003:145; Woodward, 1992:51). Woodward argues that when the Roman forces invaded Britain, they did not understand or approve of the Pagan Celtic religion, but instead of launching violent attacks on the Pagan followers, they absorbed most elements of the Celtic belief system in to a complex pantheistic ritual system imported from the Mediterranean (1992:51). The 'continuity of site' use has been cited as one of the ways the Romans modified existing ritual sites to their own ends (Ghey, 2007:27), with Haeussler and King stating that, "*…site continuity does not…mean continuity of cult…*" (2007:8). This resulted in the replacement of the collective elemental and naturalistic beliefs of Paganism with the materialism and individuality promoted by the Roman urbanised elite and the invading military forces. The Romano-British era formalised worship by creating man-made places of ritual such as temples and shrines at sites already ritually important, making the inhabitants of Britain stop seeking religious comfort in natural areas such as woods, bogs, springs or mountains (Lock et al, 2006:70) - this also explains why there is often little archaeological evidence of Pagan worship compared to that of the material based Roman form (Woodward, 1992:63). Woodward concludes with the notion that , "*…the modification of Pagan ideology for Christian consumption was almost as old as Christianity itself…*" (1992:133).

However, there is some speculation that the material culture of Romano-British religion becoming more 'Christian' and more common may *not* reflect the acceptance of the religion, but in fact the 'new' material culture may simply mask unchanged Pagan beliefs which have already been noted to produce very little archaeologically (Haeussler & King, 2007:7). There is good evidence of a revival of Paganism in the latter stages of Roman occupation in Britain which backs this point as set out by Rahtz & White (1979: all). But how does this discussion relate to the burial group of Trench 1 at the Marcham/ Frilford site? Lock et al (2006) discuss how the Marcham/ Frilford site is one with evidence of continuous site use for ritual from the Iron Age until the early Anglo-Saxon period, with the late 4th century marking the demise of the Romano-British temple but also the formal introduction of Christianity to the area (with the possible construction of a Church) – during which time the group within Trench 1 were deposited. This means that the Trench 1 groups could represent either one of two opposing theories:

1) The burials represent a group of Christians placed at the ancient semi-amphitheatre to officially mark the closure of the Pagan use of the temple site and probable spring first worshipped during the Iron Age.

OR

2) The burial group represents people who rebelled against the introduction of Christianity by overtly stating their affiliation to a place of Pagan importance.

It is extremely difficult to reach a firm conclusion regarding which of these ideas may be more likely to reflect reality than the other. There has been a low emphasis on the study of Romano-British cemeteries in comparison to the focus upon cemetery phenomena in the Anglo-Saxon period. This issue coupled with our modern concepts of Christianity affecting assumptions of past Christian practices, and the shaky understanding of the past pagan belief system, creates a very complex task in deciphering the possible thought processes and reasoning of our Romano- British ancestors for burying a discreet group away from the majority. The study of Romano-British burials and cemeteries has even been described as 'defective and unsatisfactory' by Thomas, (1985:238) although this was put down to the archaeological material being so 'very fragmentary and dispersed'(1985:239) and the fact that current understandings of Christianity has changed so much since it's beginnings in Britain.

Archaic ideas of the positioning and placement of human remains and their spirits flow through both Christianity and Pagan beliefs, for example; the need for proper burial, the non-disturbance of remains, the need for a sacred or consecrated burial ground, the releasing of the soul from the physical vessel, concept of life beyond the tomb and the immortality of the spirit (Cumont, 1922:190). These shared beliefs affect the practicalities of burial, resulting in similar methods of interment in both religions at a very basic level. The differences between Christian and Pagan burials are often seen as black and white, although at a time of transition between these two belief systems it may be difficult to separate them. Woodward (1992:96) outlines two series of characteristics which may be indicative of each belief system as far as burials are concerned:

A) <u>Christian Burials:</u>
- Strict east-west orientation (so deceased faces Christ's arrival at the Second Coming ad can rise again with body 'inviolate').
- Avoidance of overlapping / disturbance of graves (for above reason).
- Absence of grave goods (as earthly wealth is void in death).
- Preservation attempts made (coffins, plaster burials etc).
- Christian inscriptions may be associated (though none found in Britain as yet).

B) <u>Pagan Burials:</u>
- Coins placed in the mouth (to pay the ferryman to cross the river to the next world).
- Ornaments or equipment upon or next to the body (to sustain them in the afterlife).
- Prone burials or decapitation in some cases.
- North-South Alignment.
- Often disturbance of previous burials.

Using these characteristics to determine the faith of the burial group in Trench 1, it would be tempting to argue that they were Christians, as the remains follow more of the Christian attributes than the Pagan – especially as none of the small finds can be directly associated to any of the burials within the group. However, some of the remains also fulfil the Pagan qualities also. For example, SK13 was discovered to rest in the prone position, implying that the deceased was buried either under Pagan ritual, or they were a Christian social outcast, deviant or criminal (or it was a logistical mistake as explained previously). SK14 was discovered to have a copper alloy coin in possible association, although the burial

area had been very much disturbed by natural sedimentary movement, plough damage, and JCB excavations which may have displaced it. SK8 was found to lie above and disturb the burial of SK16, which may indicate evidence of Pagan practice, and there was also a large piece of pottery within the mouth cavity – though modern disturbance means this may not have been its original position. SK16 was found without the torso, and the head was misaligned with the lower limbs – this may be due to subsequent disturbance by SK8 only, although it may also represent and example of decapitation, however without any of the cervical vertebrae this is difficult to confirm, although this ritual is known in the Upper Thames Valley and the Cotswolds (Mattingly, 2007:479). It is striking that the positions of the individuals, especially their arms, are not accounted for in Woodward's (1992:96) characteristic lists, so this may be an interesting topic to pursue when comparing these remains to those found at other similar sites in Britain.

It is clear therefore that the burials within Trench 1 are difficult to assess in regards to the religious convictions of the deceased. There appears to be potential evidence for both belief systems through the positions of the remains, as well as some associated finds. However, it must be remembered that these remains were heavily disturbed over time, and the group is not large enough in number to allow firm patterns to be drawn. Had the excavation unearthed all of the 25 individuals buried in the area in more articulated positions, more concrete conclusions may have been drawn. For this reason it is not appropriate to utilise Woodward's method of identification, which in itself may not be the most secure or reliable means of determination in any case as this area of research is lacking in strong evidence.

Possible reasons for a small satellite burial group on the Temple site:

At the time of excavation of the burials within Trench 1 in the 2004-2005 Oxford University excavations, there was much speculation on the possible reasons as to why that group of individuals were buried away from the main cemetery site on the other side of the A338. The possibilities of religious affiliation with either Paganism or Christianity have been discussed above, but other possibilities and the reasons for them which were considered included:

- *Do they represent a family group?*

SK3 and SK13 remains showed mild forms of the congenital/ hereditary disease Spina Bifida Occulta, possibly indicating the deceased were closely related. This disease bears no outwardly visible markers (Roberts & Manchester, 2005:55), and so is not likely to have been a reason for segregation from the larger cemetery group due to these individuals appearing physically different. No other hereditary diseases which may be assessed osteologically were shared between the group, however this does not mean they are not related, as Spina Bifida Occulta is not necessarily always passed on genetically. Other pathology may have played a part in the decision to place the remains away from the main cemetery, for example the case of SK8, where abnormal bone formation would have blocked the canal of the internal acoustic and auditory meatus – almost certainly resulting in deafness and facial palsy which would have singled this individual out from the crowd.

The majority of interments showed evidence of degenerative disc disease resulting in Schmorl's Nodes, associated with repetitive movement or trauma as well as Enthesophytes (Roberts & Manchester, 2005:140) proving musculo-skeletal stress, implying the deceased led extremely active lives. However, these markers of stress may represent the normal levels of activity in an agricultural area during the period, especially given the predominantly late ages at which all the individuals assessed in this group died. Therefore, there is no definitive evidence regarding the possibility of the burial group representing a family circle or not.

- *Did their social standing differ sufficiently from the larger community to warrant special treatment and burial in a separate place?*

Perceptions about status and identity have been one of the chief motors for funerary ritual and practice (Mattingly, 2007:345). The individuals in Trench 1 show evidence of leading

active lives (as described above), and not those of less active delegating 'elite' members of Romano-British society. The mixture of male and female remains, as well as the small fragment of an infant skull, proves the group does not conform to typical Roman group burials such as gladiators or soldiers, or a religious male group such as priests. The burials are not expensive or elaborate in nature like those of Romano-British aristocrats found in Colchester and St Albans (Mattingly, 2007:109), and there is little difference between the treatment of individuals in Trench 1 and those remains found in the larger cemetery area, implying little difference in the social position of the group. One noticeable fact is that remains outlined in Appendix 1 are all of an older age – it could be speculated that this might represent a group of community 'elders' who commanded greater respect given their longevity. The idea of the group representing a rebellious Pagan faction has already been discussed in the above section, but it is an idea which cannot be confirmed.

- *Does the group represent a selection of social outcasts, and if so how?*

The possibilities of discrimination due to physical differences, disease or family ties have been discussed above already, however there may have been other socially determined factors as to why the burials of Trench one were so separated from the main cemetery. The treatment of criminals, deviants and suicide victims in death is well known to differ from the norm during the Roman period. For example Cumont (1922:143) states that the funeral colleges founded under the Empire ruled that anybody who put themselves to death should lose their right to burial as the curse which weighs on the suicide would render the deceased's company in the afterlife undesirable for other souls – a reason also used to prevent the burial for those put to death. The withholding of an honourable burial also no doubt stood as an example to the living as a way of discouraging them from committing suicide or undertaking any acts which would result in their execution. If this rule is true, it is clear that the remains of Trench 1 cannot represent suicide victims of executed individuals, as remains of those people simply would have not been buried either at all, or anywhere near a sacred site like the religious complex of Marcham/Frilford.

The lack of accurate knowledge regarding the burial practices of this period also prevents any further speculation on the possibilities that this discreet burial group is representative of an outcast faction of society, or the reasons why they may be.

- *Were these burials purposefully associated with the semi-amphitheatre, and if so how?*

At the time of excavation it was suggested that the placing of the Trench 1 burials next to the semi-amphitheatre was significant, but in order to answer this question within the context of this report, a few points regarding the semi-amphitheatre should be noted. It has been argued that the link between the amphitheatrical arena and the sanctuary derived from earlier Celtic practices of combats at feasts, which is manifested in the Roman period in formalised spaces. In addition, a reinforced palaeochannel has been found to run underground from the semi-amphitheatre to the River Ock many meters away. The close association of water and sanctuaries with the relationship to earlier Pagan practices, and the importance of liminal spaces are well known for this period. Water, and its manipulation, appears to have been a deciding factor in the choice of site for the semi-amphitheatre. It was also a focus of depositional activity as part of the ritual associated with the semi-amphitheatre. No evidence for seating or terracing has thus far been found within the semi-amphitheatre. This would suggest that not many people would have been able to stand on the banks to view the activity inside the arena. This indicates that visual access to the arena may have been restricted, suggesting that whatever was being performed inside the arena was ritual, and exclusive, in nature.

It was speculated that the burials were possibly placed in this location following the official introduction of Christianity to Britain in AD313 in line with the Edict of Milan, to mark the closure of the arena as a functioning Pagan-associated monument. On the other had, it was also considered that the burial of these individuals at this here may have been an overt reaction to the introduction of Christianity, by physically associating the remains with a place of earlier Pagan worship. However, without either firm dating evidence or a definite

conclusion regarding the religious preferences of the remains of Trench 1, coming to a sound judgement regarding the reasons for placing the deceased in this area is impossible.

Various reasons for the possible association of the remains with the role of the semi-amphitheatre can be speculated upon, however there is only limited archaeological evidence to support or disprove any theory. It is easy to imagine a multitude of possible motivations behind placing the individuals adjacent to the semi-amphitheatre – for example the group could represent individuals directly involved with the use of the semi-amphitheatre, as respected religious elders, religious sacrifices, living deities, or have been put there for other more sexy exciting reasons. But, these ideas are merely conjecture, and it is not appropriate to include them seriously in archaeological assessment of the site without greater evidence.

Regional Practices in the Roman period:

When attempting to understand the religious complex of Marcham/ Frilford it may be useful to turn to examples of similar sites within the region for comparison. However, before comparisons with other sites in Oxfordshire may be drawn, it is important to determine what class of religious complex we are dealing with. There has been mixed opinions on whether to class the site as being 'rural' in nature or 'urban' (Henig & Booth, 2000, 182-186; Rahtz, P,1977: 55). The modern understanding of 'rural' and 'urban' would clearly define Marcham/ Frilford as being part of the 'rural' category, although the population levels, townscapes and comprehensions of the late 4th century would have differed immeasurably – however, the majority of texts relating to the site deem it to be rural in nature, although associated with a nearby settlement area (Booth, 2001:15; Booth et al, 2007:212-213; Henig & Booth, 2000, 182-186; Rahtz, P,1977: 55). It is known that urban and rural cemeteries of Romano-Britain share many characteristics, but also have some differences (Henig & Booth, 2000:184-185). Henig and Booth (2000:184-185) outline that rural cemeteries often show considerably more variation in grave alignment then urban ones, and unusual burial rites are often more common in rural sites, for example decapitation or cremation. There is often a higher potential for use of grave goods in rural cemeteries, although the proportion is still quite low, and in both urban and rural settings there is always less than 50% of burials interred in coffins (wooden or other). These differences arguably reflect the variations on attitudes towards treatment of remains in the different settings, with the urban areas receiving more instruction and enforcement of Christian rules from the centre of the Empire given their greater provincial organisation. However, as noted by Mattingly, "*…the negotiation of power between Rome and subject peoples could produce very different results, as maps of Romano-Celtic temples…indicate…*" (2007:522).

The modern county boundaries of Oxfordshire unfortunately do not represent an administrative unit of the Roman period, however they do encompass the Upper Thames Valley and the adjoining high ground of the chalk downs to the east and south, and the limestone and ironstone plateau of the north and west (Young, 1986:58). The site of Frilford in the Roman period was in the area of the tribal/ civitas boundary between the Dubunni and Atrebates, which may have been a reason for its growth and importance during the Roman period as positioning of temples in the contact zones between tribes are known to have been relate to growth in peripheral markets (Booth et al, 2007:213; Woodward, 1992:20).

There are records of many lone burials or small groups of burials in Roman date in Oxfordshire, but there are relatively few cemetery sites (Booth, 2001:13; Henig & Booth, 2000:182). In his 2001 publication, Booth states that his research in to Roman cemetery sites in the Oxfordshire region was based on two criterion: firstly that the cemetery comprised of ten or more individuals and secondly that these individuals are spaced relatively close together - bringing the total known sites of this nature within the county to 18 (or 19 with Rhoden Downs included as it lies on top of the borderline) (2001:13). For a clear outline of the positioning of these sites, please refer to Figure 8. Eight of the group of 19 are probably associated with the nucleated settlements, being Alchester (two sites), Asthall (two sites), Dorchester-on-Thames (two sites), Frilford and Wantage (Booth, 2001:15). Booth compiled the characteristics of the 19 cemeteries in tabular form, in order to compare and contrast their

physical and component similarities and differences (Booth, 2001:15-18). Here Booth used only the information for Frilford which was gleaned from the already discussed excavations of the larger cemetery between 1860s and 1938 (Akerman, 1865; Buxton, 1921: Rolleston, 1868; Rolleston, 1875; Bradford & Goodchild, 1939), and so does not take in to account the discreet group of Trench 1 in the University of Oxford Field School excavations 2001-2009. However, the following discussion will contextualise the discreet group in to Booth's discussion.

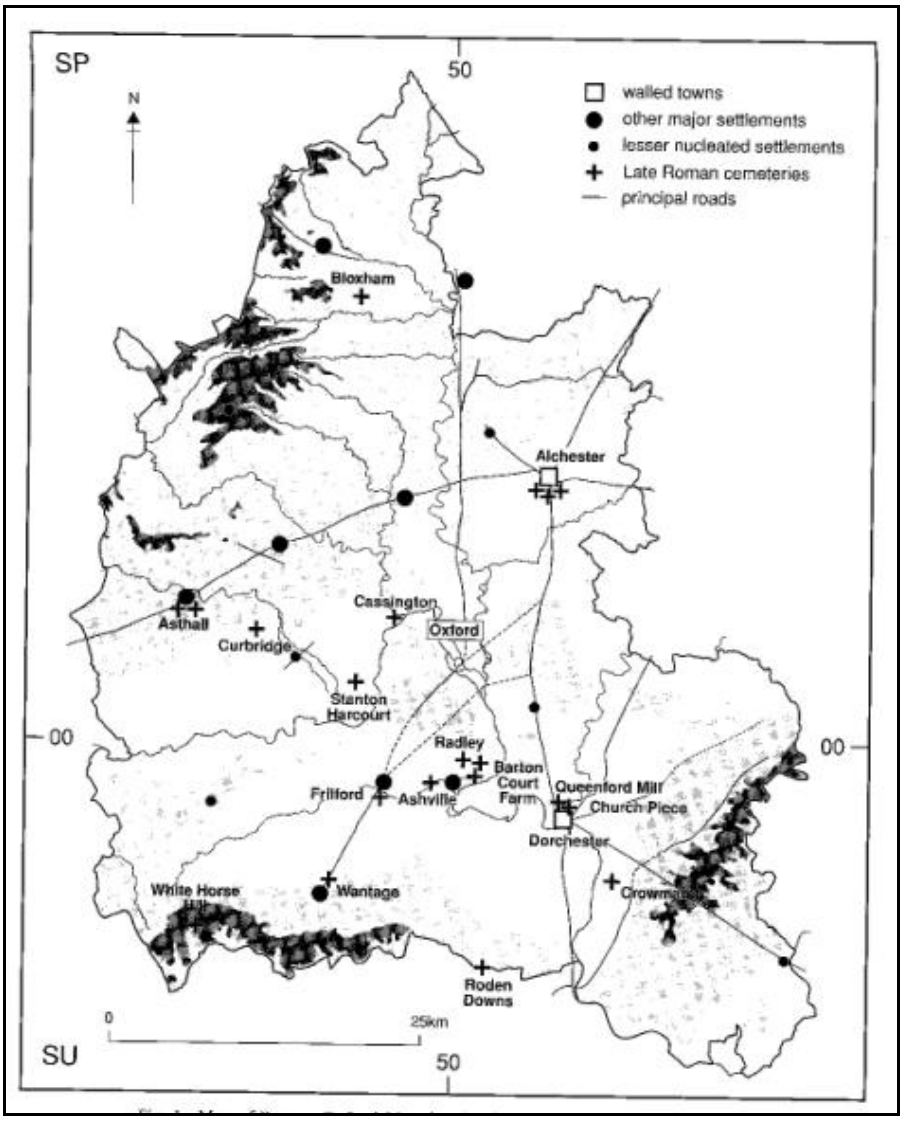


Figure 8: Map of Roman Oxfordshire showing locations of 19 Romano-British cemeteries (adapted from Booth, 2001:14)

The majority of interments at all sites discussed by Booth (2001) were inhumations rather than cremations, typical in the latter years of Roman occupation throughout Britain (Booth et al, 2007:224). In this respect, the Romano-British burials of Frilford in the larger cemetery and in the discreet Trench 1 group are in line with the traditions of the rest of the county at this time. The table by Booth (2001: 15-18) shows much variation between sites with respect to other factors such as the use of grave goods in burials, as well as the dominant alignment patterns having a mixture of N-S and W-E, sometimes both used at the same site. This mixture of alignments has may be due to religious leanings, although it is known that it is natural behaviour for humans to align things with pre-existing features such as boundary

lines. Only three of the 19 cemeteries appear to have been purposefully placed in an area specifically designated for them, being Dorchester-on-Thames (both), and Asthall Site B (Booth, 2001:19). As we know, the Frilford/Marcham main cemetery has the majority of identified Romano-British graves oriented W-E, and it is roughly positioned in line with the A338 road of which there is evidence that a road existed in the Roman era also, and there is mixed usage of grave goods. This suggests a mixture of beliefs and a relationship to existing features affected the positioning of the larger cemetery group, and the use of grave goods reflected the traditions of the rest of the county during that period.

None of the cemeteries other Oxfordshire cemeteries had semi-amphitheatres nearby, as at Marcham/ Frilford, although small ditched enclosures formed components at two cemeteries, being Radley II (associated with cremations) and Queenford Mill (associated with 5 burials). Booth assumes these associations are evidence for familial segregation (Booth, 2001:20). Neither the large cemetery group nor the discreet burial group have evidence of or ditched enclosures delineating separate clusters of burials at Marcham/Frilford. Therefore in regards to layout, definition and relationships to pre-built structures or features, it might be argued that the small Trench 1 burial group from Marcham/Frilford is dissimilar to most other late Roman cemetery sites in Oxfordshire. The interments are clearly associated with the unusual semi-amphitheatre building, they are positioned near the entrance implying respect for the importance of this ritual feature, and it is uncommon for discreet burial groups to occur so segregated away from a main cemetery area and not be contained with markers, as no others have evidence like that at Marcham/ Frilford. Therefore one could conclude that because the Trench 1 group is so far away from the main cemetery group and aligned to the entirely separate feature of the semi-amphitheatre, it is likely that the group is segregated completely from the main cemetery group. In this respect, there would appear to be no relationship at all between the larger cemetery and the Trench 1 burials.

There is only limited evidence for contemporary intercutting of graves in any of the Oxfordshire cemeteries and where it occurs in the larger cemetery group at Marcham/ Frilford it appears to have been due to late Anglo-Saxon disturbance. The depth of grave cuts also seems to vary considerably when contrasting information from all of the different sites, and Booth argues that this relates to sex and age at death – i.e. an older male would be placed in a much deeper grave than that of a younger woman. This does not correlate at all with the evidence of the discreet group of burials in Trench 1, Marcham/ Frilford, and the depth of graves were too little discussed in previous excavations of the larger cemetery group to assess.

In relation to the positioning of remains in the ground and other burial variants, a topic of much discussion in reference to the Trench 1 burials within this paper, Chambers does mention, "*...some degree of variation of the arrangement of the arms...*" in the discussion of Queenford farm, Dorchester-on-Thames (1988:41), and Booth discusses the wide range of body positions at Asthall (1992:72). However, there are many more examples of decapitations at other sites than either the main cemetery or the discreet group at Marcham/ Frilford, but it is difficult to assess why this may be without a better understanding of Romano-British burial rites and traditions.

<u>Conclusion - Are there similar sites to Marcham/ Frilford in the Oxford Region?:</u>

With the majority of the remains in the discreet group in Trench 1 being extremely disarticulated (18 of a MNI of 25 being totally scattered), it is impossible to argue strongly for specific similarities or differences with traditions seen at other local Romano-British cemeteries. More specific and detailed comparisons between the findings of the Marcham/ Frilford excavations with each of the other 18 cemetery groups outlined by Booth (2001:13-15) may prove fruitful in identifying stronger patterns or relationships at a comprehensive level, however this report cannot endeavour to cover this very large, meticulous and time consuming challenge. The fact that Marcham/ Frilford is also regarded as primarily a religious complex rather than a site of settlement or major town also sets it apart from the rest, with the majority of other Romano-British cemeteries in Oxfordshire of that period being

related to townscapes, settlement areas, or much smaller scale places of worship, often without evidence of related temple or other religious house structures.

National Parallels for Roman burials on or near Temple sites:

As with the comparisons to the Oxfordshire region, this paper cannot afford to go in to great detail or direct case studies of all sites of Romano-British cemeteries throughout the whole of Britain. At the present time, there is limited work published of this nature, instead writers have concentrated their efforts on discussing themes of Romano-British burial traditions. A detailed comparative study of the main Romano-British cemeteries and their use of space in southern Britain has been undertaken by Smith (2001), and should be referred to for greater detail of the sites assessed in this section as well as for broader discussion. Therefore, what shall be considered here are the contrasts between the Marcham/Frilford site and the general knowledge regarding the traditions followed in burial rites in the Romano-British period, the positions and use of cemeteries, their relationships to temples or shrines, with some examples of the more well-known sites.

One of the objectives for this part of the paper was to outline the relationship between cemeteries and temples at sites in Britain. This issue has been touched upon by various writers, who each come to similar conclusions (Mattingly, 2007; Watts, 1991; Woodward, 1992).

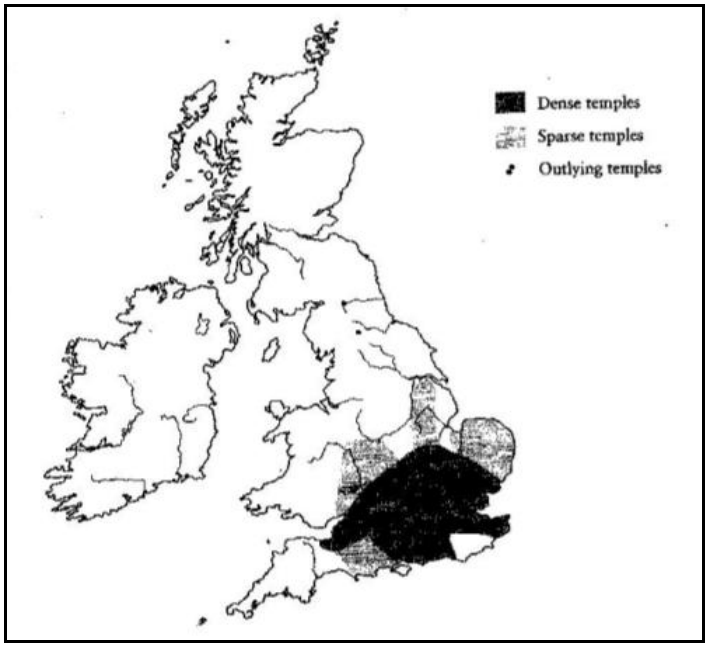


Figure 9: Distributions of temples in Britain, note the concentration of them in the south-east (Map adapted from Mattingly, 2007:481).

The earliest examples of temples in Britain are associated with urban areas, not spreading out to rural districts until later – with the number of temples in both settings peaking in the early 4th century (Mattingly, 2007:345). Temples situated in 'rural' areas usually stood within a temenos area, quite often as groups of two or more. However, religious practice in a large part of rural Britain remained un-monumentalised, making evidence of temples or shrines in association to rural religious areas difficult to detect. Some rural temple sites are known to be sited near to roads, village settlements or tribal boundaries, others are positioned in important topographical places such as Maiden Castle (Dorset) or Chanctonbury (Sussex), and some near large villa complexes as can be seen at Uley (Glouceestershire), implying that accessibility was a key factor in determining where to construct them (Mattingly, 2007:480; Smith, 2001:150).

Close proximity of temples and cemeteries is a tradition which is not well represented at Romano-British sites. Occurrences are infrequent, but have been seen at Frilford (Oxfordshire), Jordan Hill (Dorset), Lancing Down (Sussex), Weycock Hill (Berkshire), Henley Wood (Somerset) and Woodyates (Dorset) (Watts, 1991:133), as well as Brean Down (Somerset), Nettleton Scrubb (Wiltshire), Icklingham (Suffolk), Lanyatt Beacon (Somerset), Henley Wood (Avon), Witham (Essex) and Uley (Gloucestershire) (Woodward, 1992:135). However, cemeteries and temples starting contemporaneously is highly unusual and do not occur in the majority of the places listed above. Instances where temples have associations with contemporary burial are usually singular examples and therefore not an indication of regular funerary practice (Smith, 2001:157). Therefore there is little or no tradition of contemporaneous association of burials with shrines or temples in Romano-Britain, which may be due to the corpses possibly polluting the site, as burials of this era are not placed as deeply in to the ground as they are in modern interments. However, Watts does suggest that if instances of cemeteries and temple sites are discovered to have existed contemporaneously, this may be a strong indicator for Christianity at that place (1991:117).

The Marcham/Frilford temple appears to have association with the cemetery in the late Roman period, although whether the temple and cemetery features were created contemporaneously cannot be confirmed until further finds analyses of the temple excavations have been undertaken, and firmer dates of existence are known. At present, the evidence points to the Roman-British temple structures being founded in the late first century or a little later. The main cemetery site does not appear to have any activity until the late Roman period, suggesting that though the temple and larger cemetery group co-existed at some point, they were not founded at the same time. Their co-existence in the 4th century AD may be a pointer for Christianity taking over from the well attested Pagan practices on the site, but the evidence is not conclusive.

National Parallels for Late Roman Burial Practices:

This section of the report will briefly consider examples of Late Roman burials at other sites within Britain through the characteristics discussed at a site specific level for Marcham/Frilford. The cemetery sites which will be contrasted here are three of the most well documented and understood sites; Poundbury (Dorset), Lankhills (Winchester), and Bath Gate (Cirencester).

- *Grave type*

Here comparisons between the grave types found in the discreet burial group at Marcham/Frilford will be made in relation to the other sites listed above. The aspects of consideration will regard the use of coffins and the materials used in their creation, whether stone packing of grave cuts was encountered at any site, and whether the use of shrouds may be inferred as they were at Marcham/Frilford.

The great majority of the people at Lankhills had been interred in wooden coffins, all remaining of them being iron nails and some wood fragments (Clarke, 1979:142). A similar situation was discovered at Bath Gate, although the assessment of the use of coffins at this site was further confused by the high levels of disturbance through the re-use of the site (McWhirr et al, 1982:88-89). The coffins in all parts of the Poundbury excavations were also mostly made of wood, though with the nails and fittings varying in complexity. Some of these coffins were also lined with lead (Farwell & Molleson, 1993:114-132). Excavations of the larger cemetery group at Frilford/Marcham has some evidence of the use of wooden coffins (Akerman, 1865; Buxton, 1921: Rolleston, 1868; Rolleston, 1875; Bradford & Goodchild, 1939), however it is not clear whether this was commonly practiced. The Trench 1 discreet burial group did not show any evidence for interment within coffins.

Two of the sites, Poundbury and Bath Gate, had evidence of the use of stone coffins and lead coffins, although these were a lot less common than wooden ones (Farwell & Molleson,1993:133; McWhirr et al, 1982:88-92). All three of the cemeteries had evidence of stone packing of grave cuts, although examples of these were of a low percentage of the

overall number of burials at each site (Farwell & Molleson, 1993:133; Clarke, 1979:143; McWhirr et al, 1982:92-97). Whilst the larger cemetery group of Marcham/Frilford has evidence of the use of lead coffins and stone packing, there is no evidence for carved stone coffins (Akerman, 1865; Buxton, 1921: Rolleston, 1868; Rolleston, 1875; Bradford & Goodchild, 1939). The discreet burial group of Trench 1 has some evidence of a part packed grave cut (SK14), but it is believed that all of the seven individuals discussed within this report were placed directly in to the ground, without stone packing or coffins, though possibly with a shroud. At Bath Gate there was no evidence for shroud use, though it is stated that the presence of shrouds in archaeological contexts are very difficult to assess (McWhirr et al, 1982:85), and the use of shrouds in burial at Poundbury and Lankhills are not deeply considered.

The differences in interment practice between the discreet Trench 1 burial group and examples seen at other Romano-British cemetery sites, sets it out as being unusual. Reasons for not using coffins of wood or other materials may only be speculated upon as we need a greater understanding of what different burial practices represented during the late fourth century. Possible reasons for the failure to use coffins for the internment of these remains may stem from social differences between the deceased and those burying them, reflecting their position within the society of the time. It may also imply that the seven individuals followed a more Pagan belief system, unlike the larger Romano-British cemetery group which is believed to represent Christian behaviour. Though, it must also be considered that the difference in practice may not be a physical manifestation of beliefs or social differentiation at all, and that there were issues of practicality at the time of burial, such as the ground being too compact to place a bulky coffin into, or a lack of available wood.

- *Position of remains*

The position of the remains within the discreet group of Trench 1 at Marcham/Frilford has been a topic of interest within this paper, especially in regards to the placing of the arms. With this in mind, the positions of human remains at the three outlined sites will be considered, to assess whether or not varying positions are normal within cemeteries of the time, and whether the differences may indicate anything specific.

Clarke goes in to much detail regarding the different positions of remains at Lankhills (1979:137-143), stating that he position of the head, torso and legs did not vary much between sexes. However Clarke concludes that in regards to the positions of the arms at this site there seems to be, "*...the association of arm positions with the sexes...*" (1979:141) (see Figure 10). Clarke argues that according to his seven definitions (see Figure 10), *b*, *c*, and *d*, (left bent, right bent, and both slightly bent respectively) were more commonly associated with men; whereas definitions *a* and *f* (both straight, and left bent more than right respectively) were more commonly associated with women; and positions *e* and *g* were evenly distributed between both sexes.

Bodily positions at Bath Gate are considered in detail also, and the writers of that report reach similar conclusions to Clarke, although they do not argue that arm positioning is related to sex (McWhirr et al, 1982:83-85). Farwell and Molleson (1993) do not discuss specifics of bodily positions in the inhumations at Poundbury, however the do highlight that care and sophistication is evident in the placing of the remains in to the grave (1993:146). The discreet group of burials in Trench 1 at Marcham/ Frilford are too few in number, and too disturbed to infer differentiation of arm positions according to sex. Also, it appears that none of the three comparative sites have examples of arms being put in such extremely bent or placed positions as found in some of the discreet burials, for example the hand being found wrapped around the throat in the case of SK8, or the tightly bent up left arm of SK3 (see Appendix 1). SK8 is believed to have suffered from abnormal bone formation blocking the canal of the internal acoustic and auditory meatus – almost certainly resulting in deafness and facial palsy. This may have been a reason for their strange positioning as it is likely the individual would have also been mute or had difficulty speaking. Such a disability may have singled this individual out in life as well as in death, and the possibly deliberate positioning of the hand may be a representation of this disability as a mark of respect or even of fear.

Position of arms	Over-all incidence		Variation by age and sex								Chronology: stratigraphic evidence (cf. pp. 121–2 and Fig. 9)							
			Incidence among men		Incidence among women		Incidence among all adults		Incidence among children		Incidence in Area W (310–370/90)		Score in Area W	Incidence in Area F (350–410)		Incidence in Area E (370–410)		Incidence in Area O (390–410)	
		%		%		%		%		%		%			%		%		%
a both straight	71	36	23	31	23	53	59	34	12	44	56	41	−6	3	19	4	33	8	23
b left bent	28	14	13	17	2	5	23	13	5	19	16	12	−9	4	25	3	25	5	13
c right bent	39	20	15	20	4	9	33	19	6	22	28	21	−21	3	19	2	17	6	16
d both slightly bent	33	17	15	20	7	16	32	18	1	4	14	10	+8	5	31	2	17	12	33
e both on waist or chest	12	6	6	8	3	7	12	7	—	—	8	6	+1	—	—	1	8	3	8
f left more bent than right	7	4	—	—	3	7	7	4	—	—	6	4	+3	—	—	—	—	1	3
g right more bent than left	10	5	3	4	1	3	7	4	3	11	7	5	+9	1	7	—	—	2	5
Total	200	100	75	100	43	100	173	100	27	100	135	100		16	100	12	100	37	100

Note: Intact graves only (cf. p. 16). Individual skeletons in double and triple graves are counted as separate graves.

Figure 10: Table to show the position of the arms and their variation according to age, sex, and chronological evidence (adapted from Clarke, 1979:140).

In regards to the use of prone or supine positions, there is evidence of the use of both at all of the three comparative sites. Farwell and Molleson describe the seven prone burials found over the whole site at Poundbury, stating that all but one were discovered at the peripheral edges of the site, with one of those having evidence for acute deafness, which they argue may have played a part in the reasons why the individual was placed in the peripheral areas and in the position (1993:152). At the Cirencester excavations, 33 burials were found to be prone (McWhirr et al, 1992:78). At these sites, prone burials represent only a minority of the individuals within the entire sites, implying that it was an unusual practice to follow – although the reasons behind such behaviour are unknown and cannot be securely determined as outlined earlier within this report and discussed by Taylor (2003:Online). The prone burial SK13 in the discreet group of Trench 1 in Marcham/Frilford did not display any signs of severe disability, although SK8 did as discussed above, but was found in the supine position.

The possible example of decapitation in the Marcham/Frilford discreet Trench 1 burial group (SK16) will now be discussed in relation to examples at other sites. At Lankhills, seven examples of decapitation occurred, each having the head placed between the legs of the deceased which was probably removed soon after death rather than being cause of death or moved after the flesh had rotted away (Clarke, 1979:372). At the Bath Gate excavations there were six examples of decapitated burials, although at this site the skull had been carefully replaced at the top of the spine (Whirr et al, 1982:108-109). At the Poundbury site, Farwell and Molleson only briefly touch on evidence of two decapitations, though do not say where the head was placed in relation to the rest of the body in burial (1993:152). SK16 at the Marcham/Frilford site, if it is evidence of a decapitation at all (there are too many vertebrae missing for a firm conclusion), therefore may represent a situation similar to that seen at Bath Gate, as the skull was not found between the legs. However, this burial was heavily disturbed by the interment of SK8 directly above it, and so the remains are likely to have shifted from their original position. The fact that the SK16 possible decapitation burial, and the known deafness and facial palsy victim of SK8 were buried in the same grave cut may imply these individuals were outcasts or in some way separate from the community. The prone burial (SK13) also might imply some sort of social differentiation or exclusion. Also, that the remains were all interred without coffins or grave goods may have social implications but without more evidence we can only speculate.

- *Grave Goods*

The excavations of the discreet group of Trench 1 at the Marcham/Frilford site did not yield any grave goods or finds which may be confidently associated with the interments, so any meaningful comparisons to other sites in this respect is problematic. Farwell and Molleson suggest that at Poundbury, females have a greater preponderance of grave goods than males, and that infants or neonates usually do not have any at all (1993:151). At Bath Gate, only seven burials were recorded to have objects associated with them, one being highly unusual as a 'rich' burial of a three year old who was found with a silver clasped bead necklace and two bone bracelets (McWhirr et al, 1982:128-129) –this contradicts heavily with the results of the Poundbury excavations. At Lankhills, about half the Late Roman graves were furnished with coins, vessels, or personal ornaments – but Clarke argues that it should be expected that only 25-50% of any cemetery in the 4th century would have these levels of grave goods (1979:356-357).

The few items which may possibly be associated with the Trench 1 discreet burial group at Marcham/ Frilford include such things as coins and pottery. This may imply that the interred were of a Pagan background, as the items reflect those seen at other Pagan sites and would have been placed in the grave for use in the afterlife. The finds in the area were not 'rich' finds, and so would represent those interred as being of low status, more so then those buried in the main cemetery based just on the perceived value of the potential grave goods. However, if these goods were not associated with the burials of the Trench 1 discreet burial, this may imply a more Christian background. It is clear that there cannot be a firm conclusion regarding any aspects of the Trench 1 discreet burial group through grave good analysis at Marcham/ Frilford, given the limitations of the evidence itself.

Final Conclusions regarding the significance of the Late Roman burial group found in Trench 1 at Marcham, in the light of local, regional and national parallels for Roman burials on or near temple site in Britain:

The discreet Trench 1 burial group has been discussed at length from various different aspects and conclusions have been drawn throughout this report. In regards to the Trench 1 burials relating to the larger cemetery group, there are some similarities and some differences. Each set of burials appear to utilise a multitude of positions, especially in regards to the placing of the arms, but each group also has evidence of prone burials and possible decapitation burials. There appears to have been more associated grave goods in the excavations of the larger cemetery group, although as already discussed the possibly associated grave goods found in the discreet burial area of Trench 1 cannot be fairly assessed given later plough damage and sedimentary disruption. However, the larger cemetery group area does appear to have been used contemporarily with the discreet burial group area for interments as there is strong dating evidence for the fourth century at each.

In regards to contrasting the discreet burial group of Trench 1, or the larger cemetery group excavated from the 19th century onwards, to other temple sites in the region or in Britain, it is not possible to draw any strong conclusions. There are so few examples of Late Roman temple and cemetery sites in Britain that overarching themes cannot be created, though it is known that more examples exist in Roman Gaul. Also, with the majority of the remains in the discreet group in Trench 1 being extremely disarticulated, and the recording of information in earlier excavations of the larger cemetery not being complete, it is impossible to argue strongly for specific similarities or differences with traditions seen at other local Romano-British cemeteries. This situation of uncertainty is applicable to the relationship of the semi-amphitheatre to the rest of the religious complex also. There are few Late Roman temple sites in Britain with such a feature, so looking for a close parallel is impossible. One could argue that this sets Marcham/Frilford apart from the rest of Britain as a unique site, and hence one of great interest.

The possible reasons for the placement of those specific individuals in the Trench 1 area, away from the main cemetery, has been discussed in detail regarding their possible

familial relationships within the group, their potential social ranking or association with the role of the semi-amphitheatre, and the possibility that they may represent social outcasts. The speculated family ties are based on the presence of Spina Bifida Occulta in three of the seven remains, which may also imply tribal links too. However, as the discussions regarding these possibilities outline, there is a lack of definitive evidence to support any of these theories. In reference to the question of whether the discreet burial group represent Christian or Pagan interments, it is difficult to decipher the answer. According to the rules laid out by Woodward (1992:96), there appears to be greater affiliation with Christian traditions, but there are far too many unanswered issues in relation to the discreet group of Trench 1 which may also imply Paganism depending on their potential solutions, for example the problem of grave good association. There is always the possibility that in this period of religious flux, people were buried in an ostensibly 'Christian' style, without being fully indoctrinated Christians.

Therefore, the strongest conclusion which may be drawn from this report is that it is only possible to say that results are inconclusive. Further research in to the site in general may provide insight in to answering the more general questions with improved confidence, but it is clear that the Late Roman discreet Trench 1 burial group is a unique example of one of the many burial rites and traditions of nonconformity known to have occurred in Late Roman Britain.

Acknowledgments:

The author of this report would like to extend great thanks to Sheila Raven, who helped immensely in its design, compilation, and editing. Also thanks should be given to Paula Levick for allowing use of the unpublished osteological report of the Trench 1 remains, as well as the Marcham/ Frilford excavation planning team of the University of Oxford for the provision of interim reports and personal comments.

References:

Ashworth, L (2006) *Gods and Goddesses of Vikings and Northlands.* London, AS Publishing.

Akerman, JY (1865) Report on Excavations on an ancient cemetery at Frilford. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London* **3**:136-141.

Booth, P (2001) 'Late Roman Cemeteries in Oxfordshire: a Review'. *Oxoniensia* **LXVI**: 13-42.

Booth, P; Dodd, A; Robinson,M and Smith, A (2007) *The Thames through Time: The Archaeology of the Gravel Terraces of the Upper and Middle Thames. The early historical period, AD1-1000.* Oxford, The Alden Group.

Bradford, JSP & Goodchild, RG (1939) Excavations at Frilford, Berks, 1937-38. *Oxoniensia* **IV**:1-71.

Briggs, G; Cook, J & Rowley, T. (1986) *The Archaeology of the Oxford Region.* Oxford, Oxford Publishing Services.

Buxton, LHD (1921) 'Excavations at Frilford'. *Antiquaries Journal* **1**:87-97.

Casey, PJ (1980) 'Roman Coinage in Britain'. UK, Shire Publications.

Chambers, RA (1988) 'The Late and Sub-Roman Cemetary at Queenford Farm, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxon.' *Oxoniensia* **LII**:35-70.

Clarke, G (1979) 'Pre- Roman and Roman Winchester. Part II: The Roman Cemetery at Lankhills.' *Winchester Studies 3*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Cumont, F (1922) *After Life in Roman Paganism*. New Haven. Yale University.

Farwell, DE and Molleson, TL (1993) 'Excavations at Poundbury 1966-80. Volume II: The Cemeteries.' *Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society* **11**

Ghey, E (2007) 'Empty spaces or meaningful places? A broader perspective on continuity' in *Continuity and Innovation in Religion in the Roman West. Volume 1.* edited by Haeussler, R and King, AC. Rhode Island, JRA (pp19-30).

Gosden, C.; Lock, G.; Bailey, R.; Bukach, D.; Fluck,H.; Harrison, J.; Kamash, Z.; Langford, M.; Levick, P.; Lewis, H.; Majewski, J.; Raven, S.; Smallridge, J.; Warry, P.; Wheeler, C.; and Yates, S. (2005). The Vale and Ridgeway Project: excavations at Marcham/Frilford 2004. *South Midlands Archaeology* **35**:94-105.

Haeussler, R and King, AC (2007) 'The Formation of Romano-Celtic Religion' in *Continuity and Innovation on Religion in the Roman West. Volume 1.* edited by Haeussler, R and King, AC. Rhode Island, JRA (pp 7-12).

Henig, M and Booth, P (2000) *Roman Oxfordshire*. Sutton Publishing Ltd, Gloucestershire.

Hingley, R (1985) 'Location, Function and Status: A Romano-British 'Religious Complex' at the Noah's Ark Inn, Frilford (Oxfordshire)'. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* **4**(2):201-14.

Levick, P (Unpublished) *Marcham/ Frilford Excavations 2004-2005. Report on Human Skeletal Assemblage.*

Lock, G.; Gosden, C.; Daly, P.; Bukach, D.; Kamash, Z.; Levick, P.; Majewski, J.; Raven, S.; Bendall, L.; Harrison, J.; Lewis, H.; Otiende, E.; Iminjili, V.; Yeates, S. (2006) 'The Vale and Ridgeway Project: Excavations at Marcham/Frilford 2005: interim report.' *South Midlands Archaeology* **36**:55-71.

Mattingly, D (2007) *Imperial Possession: Britain in the Roman Empire*. England, Clays Ltd.

McWhirr, A; Viner, L;Wells, C (1982) *Romano-British Cemeteries at Cirencester*. Cirencester, Cirencester Excavation Committee.

Pearson, MP (2003) *The Archaeology of Death and Burial*. Stroud, Sutton Publishing.

Petts, D (2003) *Christianity in Roman Britain*. Stroud, Tempus.

Rahtz, P (1977) 'Late Roman Burial Cemetaries and Beyond' in 'Burial in the Roman World' *CBA Research Report*, **22**:53-63.

Rolleston, G (1868) Researches and Excavations carried on in an ancient Cemetery at Frilford, near Abingdon, Berk, in the years 1867-1868. *Archaeologia* **XLII**:417-485.

Rolleston, G (1875) Further researches in an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Frilford, with Remarks on the Northern Limit of Anglo Saxon cremation in England. *Archaeologia* **XLV**:405-410.

Smith, A (2001) *The Differential Use of Constructed Sacred Space in Southern Britain, from the Late Iron Age to the 4th Century AD.* BAR, British Series **318**.

Thomas, C (1985, 2nd Edition) *Christianity in Roman Britain to AD500*. London, Batsford Ltd.

Watts, D (1991) *Christians and Pagans in Roman Britain*. London, Routledge.

Woodward, A (1992) *Shrines and Sacrifice*. Avon, The Bath Press.

Young, C (1986) 'The Upper Thames Valley in the Roman Period' in *The Archaeology of the Oxford Region* edited by Briggs, G, Cook, J and Rowley, T. Oxford, Oxford Publishing Services. (pp58-63)

Online References:

Taylor, A (2003) 'Burial with Romans'. *British Archaeology* **69**: Online. Online at http://www.britarch.ac.uk/ba/ba69/feat2.shtml [Accessed 2nd December 2009].