

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**

---

**THE CEMETERIES IN ROMAN BRITAIN  
EVIDENCE FOR MANAGEMENT AND RELATED SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS,  
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE LATE ROMAN PERIOD**

**THESIS SUBMITTED BY:**

**R. CASA HATTON**

**DEGREE OF PhD**

**YEAR OF SUBMISSION: 1999**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND PREHISTORY**

---

**THE CEMETERIES IN ROMAN BRITAIN**  
**EVIDENCE FOR MANAGEMENT AND RELATED SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS,**  
**WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE LATE ROMAN PERIOD**

**THESIS SUBMITTED BY:**  
**REBECCA CASA HATTON**  
**DEGREE OF PhD**

**DATE OF SUBMISSION: MARCH 1999**

**YEAR OF ACCEPTANCE: 1999**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>GENERAL INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>6</b>
Notes to General Introduction	12
<b>CHAPTER I: ROMAN BRITAIN IN THE IV CENTURY</b>	<b>14</b>
I1 INTRODUCTION	14
I2 ROMAN BRITAIN IN THE IV CENTURY	16
I2.i Economic patterns	16
I2.ii The role of the towns	17
I2.iii The countryside	20
I2.iv Decline of the towns	21
I2.v Christianity in Roman Britain	23
I3 DISCUSSION	28
Notes to Ch. I	34
<b>CHAPTER II: ROMANO-BRITISH CREMATION CEMETERIES</b>	<b>42</b>
II1 INTRODUCTION	42
II2 LOCATION AND PLANNING	45
II2.i The cemetery sites	45
II 2.ii Planning (or internal features)	66
The act of cremation	66
Cemetery boundaries	68
Grave markers, enclosures and tombs	69
Cemetery development	72
II2.iii Location	74
External features	74
Location in relation to the settlement	75
Relocation and cemeteries of mixed burial rites	76
Observations	78
II3 DISCUSSION	79
Notes to Ch. II	85
<b>CHAPTER III: ROMANO-BRITISH INHUMATION CEMETERIES</b>	<b>89</b>
III1 INTRODUCTION	89
III2 LOCATION AND PLANNING	92
III2.i The cemetery sites	92
III2.ii Location	120
Discussion	125
III2.iii Planning (or internal features)	127
Orientation	127
Cemetery boundaries	129
Grave markers	130
Discussion	132
III3 CEMETERIES CONCURRENTLY IN USE	135
Notes to Ch. III	140
<b>CHAPTER IV: MANAGEMENT OF THE CEMETERIES</b>	<b>142</b>
IV.1 INTRODUCTION	142
IV.2 THE LAND OF A TOWN	144
IV 2.i <i>Pomerium, Territorium, Vicus</i> , 'town zones'	144
IV 2.ii Aspects of cemetery location	146
IV 2.iii Internal regulation of the burial areas	149
IV.2.iv Management competence	151

IV.2.v Conclusions	152
IV.3 THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH	154
Notes to Ch. IV	158
<b>CHAPTER V: THE RURAL CEMETERIES</b>	<b>160</b>
V.1 INTRODUCTION	160
V.2 BURIAL IN THE COUNTRYSIDE	163
V.3 WHO WAS BURIED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE	166
V.3.i The villa sites	166
Mausolea	166
The cemeteries	167
V.3.ii The farmsteads	170
V.4 EXCURSUS: TWO ROMANO-BRITISH FARMSTEADS	172
V.5 PATRONAGE AND CEMETERY MANAGEMENT	176
V.6 CONCLUSION	180
Notes to Ch. V	181
<b>CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION</b>	<b>183</b>
VI.1 INTRODUCTION	185
VI.2 LOCATION OF THE LATE ROMANO-BRITISH CEMETERIES	186
VI.3 INTERNAL LAYOUT OF THE LATE CEMETERIES	187
VI.4 EVIDENCE FOR MANAGEMENT	187
VI.4.1 increased bureaucratic control over the layout?	190
VI.4.2 increased bureaucratic control over the rituals	193
VI.5 THE CEMETERIES AS EXPRESSION OF CIVIC PRIDE	195
VI.6 FAMILY GROUPS IN THE CEMETERIES	197
VI.7 CONCLUSION: UNIFORMITY AND ROMANISATION	200
Notes to Ch. VI	
<b>FUTURE WORK</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHIC ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>205</b>
<b>APPENDIX: Main Latin sources for the late Roman period</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES AND PLATES</b>	
Table I:	General details of the early cemeteries analysed in the present work
Table II:	General details of the late cemeteries analysed in the present work
Table III:	Location of the cemeteries analysed in the present work
Table IV:	Internal features of the cemeteries analysed in the present work
Plate I	Distribution map of the cemeteries analysed in the present work
Plate II	Location of the cemetery at St. Pancras, Cirencester.
Plate III	Plan of the cemetery at St. Pancras, Cirencester.
Plate IV	Location of the cemetery at St. Stephen's Hill, St. Albans.
Plate V	Plan of the cemetery at St. Stephen's Hill, St. Albans.
Plate VI	Distribution of cemeteries to the north of Winchester.
Plate VII	Plan of the cemetery at Hyde Street, Winchester.
Plate VIII	Location of Skeleton Green, Cemetery 'A', Cemetery 'B' at Puckeridge-Braughing
Plate IX	Distribution of cemeteries at Puckeridge-Braughing.
Plate X	Plan of the cemetery at Skeleton Green, Puckeridge-Braughing.
Plate XI	Plan of cemetery 'A', Puckeridge-Braughing.
Plate XII	Plan of cemetery 'B', Puckeridge-Braughing.
Plate XIII	Location of the cemetery at Petty Knowes, High Rochester.
Plate XIV	Plan of the cemetery at Petty Knowes, High Rochester.
Plate XV	Distribution of cemeteries around London
Plate XVI	Location of the Eastern Cemetery, London.
Plate XVII	Plan of the Eastern Cemetery at HOO88, London.
Plate XVIII	Plan of the Eastern Cemetery at MST87, London.
Plate XIX	Plan of the Eastern cemetery at MSL87, London.

Plate XX	Location of the cemetery at King Harry Lane, St. Albans.
Plate XXI	Location of excavated areas within the cemetery at King Harry Lane, St. Albans.
Plate XXII	Plan of the excavated areas within the cemetery at King Harry Lane, St. Albans.
Plate XXIII	Distribution of cemeteries at York.
Plate XXIV	Location of the cemetery at Trentholme Drive, York.
Plate XXV	Plan of the cemetery at Trentholme Drive, York. First layer.
Plate XXVI	Plan of the cemetery at Trentholme Drive, York. Second layer.
Plate XXVII	Location of the cemetery the Derby Race Course, Derby.
Plate XXVIII	Plan of the cemetery at the Derby Race Course, Derby.
Plate XXIX	Location of Area 'J', Kelvedon.
Plate XXX	Plan of Area 'J', Kelvedon.
Plate XXXI	Distribution of cemeteries at Dorchester.
Plate XXXII	Plan of the cemetery at Alington Avenue, Fordington, Dorchester.
Plate XXXIII	Plan of the cemetery at the Old Vicarage, High Street, Fordington, Dorchester.
Plate XXXIV	Roman Cirencester.
Plate XXXV	Distribution of cemeteries to the north and west of Cirencester.
Plate XXXVI	Plan of the cemetery at Bath Gate (CT69 (b), CS 70, 71, 72-73 8), Cirencester.
Plate XXXVII	Plan of the cemetery at Bath Gate (CS 71-73 4), Cirencester.
Plate XXXVIII	Plan of the cemetery at Bath Gate (CS 74 10), Cirencester.
Plate XXXIX	Plan of the cemetery at Bath Gate (CT), Cirencester.
Plate XL	Distribution of cemeteries at Colchester.
Plate XLI	Plan of the cemetery at Butt Road, Colchester.
Plate XLII	Plan of the cemetery Poundbury Camp, Dorchester.
Plate XLIII	Location of the Kingsholm area, Gloucester.
Plate XLIV	Location of the sites at Gambier Parry Lodge and at 76, Kingsholm Rd.
Plate XLV	Location of the cemetery at 76, Kingsholm Rd., Gloucester.
Plate XLVI	Plan of the cemetery at 76, Kingsholm Rd., Gloucester.
Plate XLVII	Location of the cemetery at Verulam Hills Field, St. Albans.
Plate XLVIII	Plan of the cemetery at Verulam Hills Field, St. Albans.
Plate XLIX	Plan of the cemetery at Lankhills, Winchester.
Plate L	Location of the West Cemetery at Ancaster.
Plate LI	Location of the cemetery and burials in plots at Ashton.
Plate LII	Location and plan of the cemetery and burials in plots at Ashton
Plate LIII	Plan of the cemetery at Cannington.
Plate LIV	Distribution of cemeteries around Dorchester on Thames
Plate LV	Plan of the cemetery at Queensford Farm, Dorchester on Thames.
Plate LVI	Location of the cemetery at Dunstable.
Plate LVII	Plan of the cemetery at Dunstable.
Plate LVIII	Distribution of cemeteries at Ilchester.
Plate LIX	Plan of the cemetery at Little Spittle, Ilchester
Plate LX	Plan of the cemetery at Townsend Close, Ilchester.
Plate LXI	Plan of the cemetery at Bradley Hill, Somerton.
Plate LXII	Plan of the cemetery at Lynch Farm, Peterborough.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Prof. Keith Branigan, Department of Archaeology and Prehistory at Sheffield University, for his initial suggestion concerning the present work and thereafter continuous assistance and encouragement which have been invaluable and very much appreciated.

Grateful thanks are also due to Dr. John Moreland and Dr. John Barrett (Department of Archaeology and Prehistory, Sheffield University) for their help through stimulating comments.

Friends and colleagues have been most generous in the provision of unpublished information. In particular, thanks are due to Mr. Mark Wood, director of Professional Independent Services for Archaeology Ltd. (P. I. S. A .) for his useful comments on pottery production and trade in late Roman Britain, and Messrs. Tom Lane and Dale Trimble, managers of Archaeological Project Services (A. P. S.), Heritage of Lincolnshire, for supplying data concerning the excavation at the Market Deeping by-pass (South Kesteven District, Lincolnshire).

I would also like to thank Mr. Simon Kaner (Department of Property, Libraries and Heritage, Cambridge County Council) for providing information on excavations of Roman cemeteries in Cambridgeshire and Mr. Tim Malim, Dr. Paul Sparrey and Mr. William Wall, managers of the Archaeological Field Unit (Cambridge County Council) for giving me the opportunity to take part in a rescue intervention of Roman burials at Durobrivae (near Water Newton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire).

Finally, a special thank goes to Mr. Andrew Hatton director of Professional Independent Services for Archaeology Ltd. (P. I. S. A .) for his generous support and encouragement.

The author reserves all errors of facts or interpretation to herself.

## SUMMARY

*Following the conquest, local and 'Roman' funerary customs introduced to Britain mainly through the medium of the army began to interact at a different speed and rate according to the geographical distribution and intensity of pre-existing burial traditions. At the early stage of the invasion, the new-comers made themselves 'identifiable' by following their own Romanised customs. During the II century the fashion of urned cremation spread throughout the province with the funerary trends in the civilian areas progressively conforming to the military. The towns continued to follow the trends imported from the Continent by adopting the rite of inhumation during the course of the III century, with a movement of ideas from the major to the minor urban centres and the rural settlements.*

*By the IV century the evidence for regional patterns had started to fade, the process of assimilation set in motion in the course of the earlier centuries becoming far more wide-reaching and uniform in character.*

*Uniformity and less apparent display of wealth in burial do not seem to have stemmed from increased management (whether religious or secular). By the IV century, the cemeteries had developed as a means of communicating civic pride through the representation of a stable society in the context of an increasingly autonomous province. In the early period civic pride had found expression in the provision of public buildings, with the collective character in the dedication of the early monuments surviving in the later cemeteries as projection of the community imagery. At the same time, the arena for burial had been extended from the country to the town as the latter had become an acceptable place for social display albeit in private forms. It is in the 'conceptual ruralisation' of the towns that Romanisation played a part by creating the premise for the re-consolidation of familial ties and traditional customs, and by contributing towards the homogenisation of the substantial rural character of Roman Britain.*

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

During the last few decades there has been a great upsurge of interest in burial rituals and related religious beliefs concerning the after-life. This has stimulated the analysis of grave treatment and furnishing in Roman Britain and has led to the interpretation of the meaning embedded in the archaeological record for the definition of distribution patterns and degrees of homogeneity in burial practices. With particular reference to late Roman Britain, the most recent discussions have resulted in a series of differing methodological approaches and theoretical positions partly conditioned by uncertainty over the quality of urban life in both small and large towns during the IV century, and by the recognition or the rejection of the potential active role of Christianity in funerary practices and cemetery management.

## **Significant previous research**

As Jones (1991) has indicated, in the analysis of burial practices and funerary customs “multi-level patterns of variability” emerge. These patterns are related to what Jones calls the “local community level”, the “regional level” and the “Empire-wide level”.

Links between defined communities and cemeteries have been analysed in relation to the status of the parent settlements (i.e. both major and minor towns and rural settlements). In particular, recent work has made a relatively significant contribution to the study of the late Romano-British suburbs as the privileged framework where patterns of urban renewal and change can be detected, the extra-mural areas providing evidence for burial activity and commercial life in the context of the topographic development of the later towns (Esmonde Cleary 1987; Finch Smith 1987).

In the last few decades a massive array of data has also been collected and employed to produce new interpretative models for the definition of traditions at a regional level, although only in South-East England have satisfactory investigations been conducted for a confident picture of burial patterns (Black 1986, Philpott 1991) (1).

With reference to the 'Empire-wide' level, the study of the cemeteries and funerary rituals in Roman Britain still suffers from the lack of systematic comparative analyses.

It is generally accepted (see Ch. III) that two major periods of change in British funerary customs occurred under the influence of imported trends. In the course of the late I century, following the conquest of Britain by the Roman army, the rite of



cremation became the official mode of burial with inhumation (re)-emerging as the preferential and almost universally adopted funerary practice during the late Roman period (Black 1986, Philpott 1991). With the diffusion of inhumation, a number of large towns such as Cirencester (Bath Gate) (McWhirr *et al.* 1982), Winchester (Lankhills) (Clarke 1979), Dorchester (Poundbury) (Farwell & Molleson 1993) and Colchester (Butt Road) (N. Crummy *et al.* 1993 ) and minor centres alike [e.g. Ashton (Dix 1984; Hadman & Upex 1976-82; Hadman 1984), Ancaster (Wilson 1968)] witnessed the creation of extensive new cemeteries outside the main built-up areas. In most cases, the new cemeteries were extensive in size, both absolutely and relatively to the earlier ones. These cemeteries tended to be spatially allocated and chronologically contained, some being in use for a limited period of time.

Far from representing the spontaneous resurgence of a native tradition, the "re"-appearance of the practice of inhumation in Britain during the III- IV century has been interpreted in its own rights as an entirely new phenomenon which conditioned the facet of the late Romano-British burial practices through the shift of the cemeteries and the creation of large orderly areas for prevalently unfurnished coffined inhumations laid out in rows and lines within regular bounds, mainly on a west-east orientation, the graves being aligned on pre-existing or contemporary topographic features.

The phenomenon has been sometimes referred to as the "managed cemeteries" and tentatively explained as the result of the diffusion of Christianity following the edict of Constantine (Thomas 1981, 232). The first criterion for the definition of potential Christian cemeteries in Britain has to be set by a chronological horizon of probability. In other words, the Christian cemeteries in Roman Britain would have had certain temporal limits represented by historical factors such as the edict of Constantine in AD 313 and the withdrawal of the Roman forces around AD 410 (2). The main problem with this interpretation arises when trying to establish firm chronologies for the supposed Christian cemeteries the dating of which, in some instances, seems to precede the diffusion of Christianity in the province (3). Furthermore, when trying to identify Christian cemeteries in Roman Britain, it is necessary to consider the limitations of the criteria applied, all too often depending on negative evidence. So far, the ranking methods (Thomas 1981; Watts 1991) have given the best results it has been possible to achieve by introducing a scale of probability. *Contra*, attempts at ranking cemeteries according to the degree of incidence of positive traits - which have been suggested as possible indicators of both the pagan character or the Christian nature of a cemetery as a whole or a group of burials within a cemetery - have to deal with the dilemma whether to discount the rare occurrence of a particular trait, thus running the risk of oversimplification, or introduce sub-distinctions which may compromise the effectiveness of the analysis.

From a different perspective, the creation of the organised and extended cemeteries has been interpreted as a solution to the problem of finding space for inhumation burials outside the built-up area of the late towns (Philpott 1992, 226-7). The kind of organisation behind the cemeteries would indicate the presence of a form of bureaucratic control over the allocation of large areas of land to burial use and over the careful positioning and layout of the burials in plots and rows. The origin of this bureaucratic control has been related to such historical factors as the organisation of the provinces of the Empire under Diocletian and Constantius (Chlorus) at the end of the III century. Accordingly, with the creation of a strong administrative apparatus and the reinforcement of local governments in the major towns, control over the cemetery organisation might have been exercised through a body of specialists who thus became responsible for those funerary practices previously undertaken by the family of the dead (Philpott, *ibid.*). The explanation for the development of the late Roman cemeteries in terms of administrative creations is mainly based on the lack of evidence for distinctive material expressions of religious faiths (Christianity included) in the funerary practices as potential causal factors. Therefore, it has been argued that west-east orientation of the graves, little disturbance of the burials, care of the body and absence of grave furnishing generally accepted as potential indicators of Christianity might have been adopted by the Christians themselves as constituted practices which were found to be consistent with their religious beliefs (Rahtz 1977, 54; Thomas 1981, *passim*; Philpott 1991, 227).

### **Scope of the study**

In relation to the development of the new kind of cemetery layout in the IV century, there is one main question which archaeologists and historians have started to address: namely, how much progress can be made from reading the burial record as evidence for population size and the condition of urban life in late Roman Britain, given the scarcity of dated samples, uncertainty over the precise limits of the cemeteries, burial density and, in some cases, unsatisfactory chronological evidence. Emphasis has been placed on words such as “town” and adjectives such as “urban” as it seems that the creation of the “managed cemetery” was, at least in origin, a more specific urban prerogative involving both major centres and minor towns (above). There is evidence that in small towns burial could take place in a more or less formal and organised way (4). Whether the degree of cemetery organisation may have reflected the administrative status of the parent settlement

remains debatable (5). Moreover, if it cannot be doubted that the pattern originated in an urban context, it did not remain confined to the towns. A few rural settlements such as Lynch Farm (Jones 1977) and Bradley Hill (Leech 1981), for instance, have provided evidence for extensive organised cemeteries which had served small farmsteads dated to the III and late IV century respectively (6). From a preliminary analysis there appears to be no direct link between cemetery lay-out and kind of settlement indicative of 'administrative status'. This is suggested by the widespread distribution of a pattern which seems to display a certain degree of homogeneity, being internally consistent at each site and broadly conforming to the main stream of burial throughout Roman Britain in the IV century.

In spite of the validity of these observations that can be taken to exemplify the current of "secular" (in the meaning of non-Christian) interpretation of the factors behind the development of the IV century cemeteries, one fundamental question is not addressed: namely, why did the creation of these organised cemetery occur and, following from this, who or what was responsible for it.

No systematic attempt has been made to deal with the wider question of cemetery lay-out, development and organisation in details. This task has been attempted here. The main aim of the present work has been to investigate selected features displayed by the late Romano-British cemeteries and to suggest a framework of research that, it is hoped, will contribute to enlighten the dynamics of social continuity and change and provide information on the position of the State and the Church in matters of cemetery organisation beyond funerary practices.

## **Methodology**

In order to reduce the considerable amount of information and thus the risk of fruitless generalisation, emphasis has been placed on aspects which have been subjected to little, if any, systematic investigation in the past (Esmonde Cleary 1987, Finch Smith 1987). In particular, the appearance of the so-called "managed" cemeteries (Thomas 1981, 232) has been central to this analysis in the light of what the present author has interpreted as two aspects of the same phenomenon, namely location and planning (or development) of the burial grounds. With regards to the former, attention has been paid to those features which may be defined as external, the location of the cemeteries being examined in the broader context of analysis of the surrounding suburbs in association with different types of urban settlements (major and minor towns). Emphasis has been placed on the evidence for industrial/rural (or other) activity on the sites which were subsequently used for burial in order to detect the extent of "shrinkage" occurring in the peripheral areas

during the IV century, the diffusion of particular patterns and the degree of organisation of the cemeteries as a potential *discrimen* of settlement status.

In relation to the second aspect, *planning*, internal features have been the focus of the analysis in the light of the evidence for burial rites and grave treatments related to those aspects of internal organisation of the cemeteries, namely the presence or absence of rows and plots for burial, focal graves and burial markers which might provide indications of management. On the subject of management, one of the aims of the investigation has also been to detect the extent to which the presence or absence of the Church in late Roman Britain may have conditioned the organisation and lay-out of the proposed Christian cemeteries.

The word 'planning' has been preferred to that of 'development' in order to emphasise the component of intervention which is directly implied by the concept of management as the driving force behind both creation and maintenance of the burial grounds in Roman Britain. From this point of view, location and planning appear to be intrinsically linked as different aspects of one coherent phenomenon. One without the other provides a faulty narrative: as we shall see, not only does the choice of an area to be destined for burial seem to have been subjected to the application of a series of specific topographic criteria but also to have offered spatial scope for a subsequent development to be realised in the form of orderly cemetery growth.

The arrangement of the present study which analyses aspects of burial and management separately leads to some inevitable reiterations due to "sectioning" of the subject matter. This represents an attempt to achieve the best results in terms of clarity working within the boundaries of the available information.

There is an awareness of the problems related to the kind of investigation and the danger of rushed generalisations in the absence of substantial available evidence, both from an archaeological and historical point of view.

### **Limitations of the study**

Although chance discovery and extensive excavations have together allowed archaeologists to uncover a number of cemetery areas and scattered burials sufficient to predict the existence of both cremation and inhumation cemeteries throughout Roman Britain, the analysis of the subject matter is hampered by a series of limitations. Major problems are posed by the quality, quantity and uneven distribution of the archaeological evidence. The sample available for study is limited and often biased, the appraisal of the cemeteries being confined to the civilian major

towns of lowland South-East England and in particular to the late inhumation cemeteries. As a result, problems attendant upon excavations and availability of information have partly conditioned the kind of research questions.

At a theoretical level, difficulties emerge when trying to assess the impact of 'Romanisation' on the local *substratum*. At present uncertainty rests upon the introduction of practices whose origins are rooted in pre-Roman times (7) and upon the continuity of burial traits in the post-Roman period (8). As a consequence, the presence of anomalies tend to be overlooked for the sake of the definition of the general trends. Within the Roman period itself, the lack of archaeological evidence and firm chronological parameters to be fixed in a common horizon hampers the definition of the insular traits which define the facet of the cemeteries in Roman Britain. The scarcity of datable III century graves makes it difficult to trace the origin and development of burial rites which were practised over much of Britain by the IV century. Sites for which findings provide insights into the organisation and development of a major urban cemetery in use over a long period of time with a wide range of burial practices are few in number. The dominant lack of continuity of burial and the relocation of the cemeteries away from the early ones hampers the analysis of developments through time and affects the analysis of patterns of social change and continuity.

## INTRODUCTION: NOTES

(1) For example, Philpott (1992, 225) has identified a geographical distribution pattern based on the reoccurrence of specific burial features in South-East Britain. According to Philpott, the rite which most clearly defines the geographical zone is decapitation, a practice which seems to have developed by the last decade of the III century and to have been practised during the following century. Another distinguishing feature is the distribution of hobnailed footwear in the graves, the concentration of which becomes higher by the later III-early IV century. Several classes of grave furniture have also marked concentration in the zone, especially equipment (knives, spindle-whorls and bone combs, the latter from the middle of the IV century) in association with both female and male burials. On the other hand, pottery as grave furniture tends to decline after a peak of popularity in the late III-early IV century.

(2) The final withdrawal of Rome in the first decade of the V century did not cause the complete death of Christianity. The question of religious continuity is discussed by Thomas (1981, 53-60) according to whom Christianity lived on in the Sub-Roman period in those areas away from Anglo-Saxon elements, i.e. in the North, North-West and South-West of Britain. Additional evidence from proto-cathedrals and churches from towns such as Lincoln and Canterbury would point to a more widely distributed phenomenon of continuity with little gap between the Roman and sub-Roman phases (Watts 1991, 215 ff.; 1993, *passim*). On the other hand, heresy and reversion to the old religions following the Roman withdrawal would indicate a break in the hierarchical order and organisation of the Church.

(3) For example, the third phase of burial in the cemetery at Verulam Hills Field (St. Albans) with a sequence of inhumations being aligned to a religious building (a church?) *ca.* 150 metres away from the burials themselves (Watts 1991), and the earlier inhumations in the main cemetery at Poundbury (Dorchester) (Green 1977, Watts 1991, Farwell & Molleson 1993) have been dated respectively to the late III century and to the second decade of the IV century when Christian influence on burial practice in the community at large was unlikely to be strong. In the specific case of Verulam Hills Field the evidence from the exiguous number of burials might simply point to the presence of a very small proto-Christian nucleus.

(4) At Ilchester the rears of properties on the edge of the town were used for burials (Esmonde Cleary 1989, 80). For the analysis of the small towns in general, the amount of available information is still inadequate due to the lack of extensive excavations. With regards to the cemetery development in the context of the minor towns, mention of disturbance of burial areas in places like Alcester and Irchester by records of the last century seems to indicate the presence of extensive, though less formally organised, cemeteries, in comparison with those associated with the major towns (Esmonde Cleary 1989, 80).

(5) See Esmonde Cleary 1987, 176 and Philpott 1992, 227 for the hypothesis of a possible connection between status of the settlement and degree of organisation displayed by the associated cemetery.

(6) The evidence from Lynch Farm alone would suggest that in Britain the rural communities adopted inhumation at the same rate as the urban. Unfortunately, the knowledge of the rural cemeteries in Roman Britain is still unsatisfactory. It is, thus, dangerous to consider the evidence from a few sites as representative of the funerary custom in rural Britain as a whole.

(7) For a detailed analysis of Iron Age funerary practices in Britain, see Whimster 1981.

(8) Difficulties arise when dealing with the so-called Sub-Roman cemeteries, a group of very large rural cemeteries such as Cannington and Bradley Hill, or cemeteries such as Dorchester on Thames associated with a small town, whose beginning falls within the Roman age and whose use continues long into the Post-Roman period. Rahtz (1977) has made an attempt to define this "... class neither obviously Roman, nor clearly related to the English settlements..." He distinguishes between Sub-Roman secular, Sub-Roman religious (associated to sites which had been religious, predominantly pagan, as potential indicators of continuity), Sub-Roman Christian cemeteries and cemeteries located on hilltops (associated with hill-forts re-occupation in the Post-Roman period, probably with religious, whether pagan or Christian, connotation). The problem concerning the definition of these relatively long-lived cemeteries is partly linked to the more general problem of the lack of continuity in the use of the Christian burial grounds. This fact sets Britain apart from comparable North-European examples (i. e. Gaul and Rhineland) although there the evidence is limited to the cities where investigation of churches with early dedications has revealed a series of proto-Christian cemeteries. In these cases, identification rests more on historical continuity than upon direct archaeological evidence provided by the late Roman burial areas.

# CHAPTER I

## ROMAN BRITAIN IN THE IV CENTURY

### (A Few Remarks On Economic And Social Aspects)

#### I.1 INTRODUCTION

The framework of the present chapter is justified by the fact that when attempting to examine aspects related to burial - however specific these aspects may be - it is not possible to leave socio-economic factors out of consideration. However, due to the complexity of the subject matter, emphasis has been placed on selected topics which are essential to the understanding of the historical and archaeological context for the period under examination: namely, the function of the late Roman towns and the expression of *Romanitas* in the countryside. The analysis has deliberately taken the form of a series of remarks to avoid writing a "*Breviarium a 'Britannia' condita*" which would result in over simplifications or a fruitless repetition of concepts already analysed in depth in recent studies.

The period under examination has been the focus of a great upsurge of interest in the decades which have elapsed since the publication of Jones' pioneering work, *The Later Roman Empire* (A. H. M. Jones 1964, Oxford). In particular, as a result of the development of urban archaeology during the last forty years, increasing attention has been paid by both historians and archaeologists to the fate of the late Romano-British towns. Contrasting interpretations of the available evidence as indicative of continuity (1) or total decline (2) of the traditional forms of urban life have given rise to extreme positions. Overall, the method of analysis has too often resulted in an uncritical examination of the data due to individual examples being studied in isolation and subsequently used to generalise about the whole province, or in a series of comparative exercises. With reference to the latter, the examination of aspects related to Late Roman has been traditionally conducted in the context of the earlier period, with emphasis on topics more pertinent to the I and II century, or in relation to the social milieu of the later centuries in search of potential trends marking the transition from the Ancient World to the Middle Ages. It is only in recent times that the late Roman period has been recognised as an independent field of research and given the appropriate topics of analysis. Moreover, following the introduction of new interpretative parameters, interest has shifted from the search for positive or negative evidence for continuity of



urban life in quantitative terms towards the re-definition of the essential quality of the towns in the late Empire, the emphasis being placed on the broad series of social relationships and their transformation through time.

Interest has also been paid to individual areas of research to be inserted in the general background of the period under investigation. In particular, the study of the urban conditions in late Roman Britain has developed in the wider context of analysis of the countryside. As a result, the traditional paradigms and related questions have been re-formulated and both pictures of crisis and continuity re-dimensioned by the introduction of the concept of change.

## I.2 ROMAN BRITAIN IN THE IV CENTURY

### I.2.i ECONOMIC PATTERNS AND POTENTIAL SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The analysis of economic patterns has been traditionally centred on the study of pottery due to the product being durable and ubiquitous. As Peacock has stated, '... it is important to assess the likely place of Roman pottery making in the Roman economy ... and of pottery... as an index rather than an object of trade...' (Peacock 1982, 152 ff.). With the exception of a few possible items of very high value and rarity, pottery, as a day-to-day commodity, was not transported in its own right but as part of mixed cargoes which were generally organised for the trade of perishable goods (3). Therefore, systems of production and distribution of pottery have been taken as representative of the total pattern of exchange.

*In medias res*, the economic situation for late Roman-Britain can be summarised as follows: by the III century a general decline of the inter-provincial (long distance) trade and its reduction to normal cross-Chanel contacts is apparent. In parallel with this decline a growth in local pottery production (whether in relation to the necessity of replacing unavailable imports (Fulford 1989) or under the stimulus of competition (Millett 1990, Ch. 7) and, in more general terms, a tendency towards growing economic self-sufficiency seem to have occurred (Hingley 1982, 38). The apparent loss of attractiveness to overseas traders (4), far from being an indication of economic crisis, has been taken as an evidence for regional economic expansion. In relation to regional patterns, by comparison with the situation for the Early Empire, during the middle-late III century the number of pottery producers appears to have undergone a process of reduction with the major workshops emerging from pre-existing modest industries or *ex novo*, and both the surviving industries and the new ones being located in rural areas rather than in urban contexts, generally in clusters near *civitas* boundaries. On the other hand, the average scale in pottery production and distribution increased progressively with larger areas being supplied. The location of some of the kilns has been related to the growth and development of the 'small' towns during the late Roman period (Millett, *ibid.*). However, most pottery industries were located at great distances even from these centres (Fulford, *ibid.*). Availability of resources (such as wood and water) or beneficial location of the kilns (e.g. in relation to rivers) are among the factors which may partially account for the development of certain rurally based activities, the physical conditions of the

areas of pottery production enabling some industries to extend their distribution and capture a larger market.

A different kind of approach for the interpretation of the new pattern has been based on the evidence for pottery distribution in relation to human rather than physical geography, the emphasis being placed on the location of the pottery industries at the *civitas* boundaries (Millett, *ibid.*). Accordingly, far from reflecting a breakdown in the social control of exchange (5), the evidence for the distribution of pottery would show that the late Roman period witnessed its continued dominance, within a context of change to be related to aspects of rural growth. Exchange of pottery could have been thus determined by social (Millett 1990) and political-administrative (Hingley 1982) structures rather than resulting from the operation of a free market. However interesting the social model may appear, it is not corroborated by substantial and conclusive evidence. Furthermore, products well established in Pre-Roman times may be expected to have constituted a more privileged means of expression of social symbolism and identity than products imitating artefacts originally imported and, thus, foreign or superimposed to specifically local traditions. Finally, the rural location of the new pottery kilns has not to be taken as representing an exclusively rural as opposed to urban basis for the development of the late economy in Roman Britain (Esmonde Cleary 1985; 1989 Ch. 3), for certain kilns (in particular, those specialising in the production of fine ware) were well placed for access to the *civitas* capitals and associated 'small' towns. Thus, a rural location may still have been geared to a urban marketing strategy (6).

### 1.2.ii THE ROLE OF THE TOWNS

From the observations in the previous section it is apparent that the function of the late Romano-British town was undergoing a process of change. It is now currently accepted that decline in Roman Britain did not occur before the last third of the IV century (below). On the basis of the available archaeological evidence it has been suggested that a decline of the major administrative centres (i.e. the 'large' towns) occurred in parallel with the development of the 'small' towns as economic centres and cores for production and marketing, the shift of balance between the so-called 'major' and 'minor' towns being accompanied by growing evidence for a renewed life in the countryside with investment in agriculture and a boom in villa building (Hingley 1982, *passim*; Millett 1990, Ch. 6). The wealth displayed in the latter was overtaking that of the town houses

themselves, the number of which had, however increased to the detriment of the timber artisan buildings related to economic activities.

The administrative changes introduced by Diocletian with the decentralisation of tax collection (through delivery and requisition in kind in small centres, forts and *mansiones* included) and the development of the minor towns as markets for the revenue they could generate whether or not under elite control (extra-mural villas in the proximity of a few small towns have been related to the presence of a potential minor elite [Millett, *ibid.*]) would be among the causes behind the interconnected phenomena of decay of the large towns and development of the 'small' ones. The changed administrative system would have caused a loss of incentive among the curial class of the major towns (as shown by the complete cessation of the traditional forms of civic pride and euergetism expressed in the construction of public buildings) as a consequence of the burden of the financial demands which was placed upon the council members. Thus, the large towns would have become less important for 'social display and elite competition' still acting, however, as focal points for the group identity of the *civitas*. From this point of view, the evidence for the distribution pattern of the pottery and, in direct connection with the *civitas* capitals, for the 'coherence' of spatial grouping of the mosaics would be further indications of a process of identity projection (7).

From a different perspective, the increasing amount of archaeological evidence from both urban and extra-urban areas does not seem to point to a general dereliction of civic duty during the IV century, neither to suggest any marked enthusiasm (Esmonde Cleary 1989, Ch. 3). The late town had changed function, as testified by the dereliction of many public buildings (namely the *forum-basilica* complexes) which had characterised the *facies* of the early town and were no longer found useful for their traditional function (8). At the same there is evidence for town houses, in particular in the major urban areas, and for artisan-buildings in both small and large towns, showing that the towns were still centres of manufacture and distribution of finished goods and unavailable source of material (Esmonde Cleary 1993, *passim*). In terms of administration, the revenue and expenditure cycle generated by the central government was essential to the existence of the large towns and their elites as the transaction of the produce from the countryside for cash (gold and silver coins and bullion were required for the payment of certain kinds of taxes) occurred at the large towns with the state as the main consumer for such produce. In turn, the towns were central for the functioning of the revenue system as taxes were still raised locally under the responsibility of the *decuriones*. Finally, both high value and day-to-day goods were still traded from the major towns.

It is only from the last third of the IV century that decline occurred in both urban and extra urban areas. In particular, the contraction of the suburbs, mainly occupied by artisan buildings which were demolished and not replaced, seem to indicate that the economy of the late Romano-British towns did not need to sustain the population of the earlier period (Esmonde Cleary, 1989). Similarly, most of the burial grounds ceased to be in use soon after AD 400, pointing to a possible demographic collapse.

The decay of the major towns has been often related to an increasing tendency by the curial class to shrink from their duties, due to the burden of taxation and the reduced status of the office of the *decuriones*, a phenomenon to which the central authority answered by making hereditary and compulsory the civic responsibilities (the inheritance of property was sufficient to compel the heirs to take on the financial and public responsibilities legally tied to the property itself [Johnson 1980]). To discover how onerous these duties were (or were regarded to be) is not an easy task. The evidence suggests a growing tendency for the *decuriones* to retire to the country estates. The boom in villa building in the IV century has been thus partly related to this phenomenon (Higham 1992; Arnold 1984). According to Higham, from the end of the III century the towns entered a period of decay; a major causal factor may have been the withdrawal of aristocratic expenditure which was traditionally directed to the towns. Influx of investment to villas in some areas of Britain may show that the aristocracy sought to distance themselves from the more onerous demands of the government by dispersing into the countryside and minimising the overheads, although many town houses were maintained and, presumably, periodically occupied. In the context of villa building, a growing differential between the more successful country residences concentrated on the Cotswolds around Cirencester and the Bristol channel and the remainder (many villas failed to survive to the middle of the IV century) seems to have occurred. According to Higham (*ibid.*), the aristocracy was numerically shrinking with an increasing number of villas owned by a few wealthy families, probably as a consequence of proscriptions carried out among the landowner class by Paul "the Chain", following the attempt at usurpation by Magnentius in 354 AD (Amm. Marc. XIV 5, 6). If the members of the aristocracy were fewer, the system of patronage would have become more extensive with consequences for the peasantry (below) (9).

### I.2.iii THE COUNTRYSIDE

On the subject of patronage, the relationship between villas and other kinds of rural settlements is worth noting in the context of a general analysis of social aspects.

The normal pattern of Romano-British rural settlement is a dispersed one. The question whether or not the two forms of settlement, the 'romanised' villas and the 'native' farmsteads, were mutually exclusive from both an economic and social point of view, or had a measure of interdependence, gives rise to the more general question of the nature of the estates themselves. It is known from the literary sources that wealthy land owners could own properties in many places within the Empire (this was certainly the case with the great senatorial families, e.g. Melania the Younger (10)). Whether the estates were worked by a 'tied' colonate, an institution generally related to the late Empire, is still a matter of debate. *Coloni* as *adscripticii* were linked to the land. The term *adscripticius* was used in the context of registration for taxation purposes and may have implied a form of subordination to the landlord. The relationship between *dominus* and *colonus* is not fully understood to date, nor is that between *servus* and *colonus* sometimes appearing in junction in the same legal texts. Slavery is not directly attested in Roman Britain, although few villas seem to have had provision for housing a labour force (Branigan 1977b; Branigan 1980, 160-162) (11). Given that the *coloni* were originally (and remained in legal theory) free, it is possible that they retained a measure of independence. Therefore, many farmsteads may have been dependent on the local villas representing the dwellings for the *coloni*, or could have been tenurially independent with their occupants owing labour service or paying rents. An estate would have been not just 'a tract of land, but also a network of social obligations and responsibilities' (Esmonde Cleary, *ibid.* 115). The hypothesis of a tenurial relationship between farmsteads and villas is plausible: in fact, the structure of the tribal system in the later Iron Age provided for an elitarian ruling class to whom the peasant tribesmen owed allegiance. The concern of the Romans to preserve the original tribal structure could have ensured the survival of this attitude so that in the later empire the peasant communities might have still recognise their dependence upon the villa owner (Johnson 1980). Extensive excavations on villa sites in Britain have now shown very frequent cases of Iron Age farm-buildings underlying the Romano-British villas. This may suggest, without, however, proving it, that the villa owner 'was a direct descendent of the Iron Age one' (Jones 1984, 251; Miles 1988, 60-72; Hingley

1989, 102 and 133 ff.), reinforcing the assumption of a link between villas and local elite, the same elite that was involved in the administration of the towns. Therefore, the villas located around the towns could have been the properties of the *curiales* of the urban communities.

From a different perspective (Higham, *ibid.*), in the early Empire the landscape had long been divided into units for agricultural purposes with implications for land tenure. The peasant communities may have enjoyed various customary rights of use of the land. During the last century the system seems to have witnessed new pressure: the intrusion of foreign landowners (12), tax dependence, debts and 'conflation' of clients with tenants enhanced the profile of lordship and transferred rights in land from free peasant communities to the aristocracy. As a consequence of this, 'proprietary' as opposed to 'patronal' control over land and communities would have increased the distance between elite and peasantry (13).

#### I.2.iv DECLINE OF THE TOWNS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE

While in the Roman Empire the network of towns remained essential for administrative and economic purposes, and for the maintenance of a cultural identity, it is in the countryside that the bulk of the population lived, the land providing the economic basis on which the towns depended for their own economic prosperity and the opportunity for them to be engaged in production and trades. It is only in recent archaeological and historical studies that increasing attention has been paid to individual towns in relation to their rural background, mainly following the development of new techniques of survey (e.g. see the survey of the Upper Thames Valley by Miles 1988). Nonetheless, sites for which an integrated treatment of the evidence is possible are still relatively few.

From the study of settlement patterns it would appear that in the course of the IV century strong pressure was exerted on the land. Pottery finds from a large number of sites and evidence for cultivation in marginal agricultural areas would point to a growth of the population. Additionally, an improvement in the techniques of cultivation (Green 1986; Jones 1989) and a shift of emphasis in the economy of certain non-villa sites (Branigan 1977a, 87-92) have been observed. Whether pressure on the countryside during the IV century was due to a need to cope with the burden of taxation upon the land, or was simply the result of a peak in the rural population, is not clear. What is certain is that, on the basis of the evidence for continuity of urban life, a good proportion of the agricultural output

was still destined for the towns where, besides the payment of taxes, the exchange of the farm produce for other commodities and services could take place.

The picture for the later IV century is more fragmentary. From archaeological investigations it would appear that many villas underwent a process of decline, to be abandoned during the later IV-early V century. However, evidence from the estates would suggest that the land was still farmed well into the V century if not beyond (Branigan 1977a, 93-108). At the same time, during the last quarter of the IV century, a reduction in the size of the urban population seems to have started to occur (Esmonde Cleary 1985; 1989). The phenomenon of decline in villa buildings raises several questions: namely, where the villa owners may have gone once they left the estates and what happened to the estates themselves. The episode of AD 367 and the barbarian raids in general may have made rural conditions difficult creating a feeling of general instability, in spite of the fact that the waves of invasion did not start until later. A reduction in the accommodation and standard of the villa buildings seems to imply that many owners had returned to the towns and no further investment was made in their country residences (Branigan 1977a, *ibid.*). This may explain the archaeological data pointing to a continuity of urban life and the presence of organised communities which were still operating during the V century (14), due to the towns being perceived as functional and secure. However, the evidence for buildings being constructed and/or occupied during the V century remains very small. Similarly, the existence of extensive inhumation cemeteries associated with both major and minor towns would indicate that in the IV century there was no dramatic contraction in the size of the urban population. The pattern changed towards the end of the IV century, when most of the cemeteries ceased to be in use soon after AD 400, the evidence from the burial grounds being consistent with the situation for the suburbs as a whole and pointing to a possible demographic collapse. *De facto*, the evidence for occupation indicates that the extra-mural areas (and, progressively, the cores) started to decline sometime in the late IV century, probably affecting the role of the towns as poles of attraction for the rural population and, in the long run, changing the overall balance between town and country.

Farming activity during the V century may be argued on the basis of an optimistic interpretation of the evidence for continuity of urban life (the existence of urban communities to be fed implying that the countryside was still providing an adequate food supply). On the other hand, if one assumes that urban contraction occurred, there is no indication for any increasing activity in rural settlements which might be expected as a result of the abandonment of the towns by the urban population.



In the present state of knowledge, it is not possible to assess whether a general decrease or increase of the population occurred in Late Roman Britain or whether the size remained steady (15). There is the need for more data that can only come from archaeological investigation. We should avoid the temptation to make generalisations and either overestimate the positive evidence or accept the lack of evidence as proof *a silentio*. The picture may be also distorted by the difficulty of detecting settlement patterns and by the absence of reliable means of dating with coins not being supplied to Britain after AD 402, and pottery, mainly coarse ware, which is difficult to locate in a precise chronological horizon after the decline of the factory-made pottery in the early V century. What the evidence seems to suggest is that a complex and fairly continuous, though not homogeneous, demographic readjustment took place in many areas of Roman Britain during the IV century, with a movement of the population involving both rural and urban sites and causing a shift of balance in the relationship between the towns and their surrounding countryside.

#### 1.2.v RELIGIOUS CHANGES: CHRISTIANITY IN ROMAN BRITAIN

As seen above (1. 2.5), in the Late Roman period Christianity played a major role in social changes. With regards to Britain, the phenomenon of Christianity has been the subject of investigation by archaeologists and historians who have tried to read the written sources and the material record as positive or negative evidence for the existence of an organised Church in Britain during the late Roman period. Two main positions have been taken which can be exemplified with recourse to the works of Frend and Painter: accordingly, there was a poor but expanding church (Frend 1968, 37-49) or, on the contrary, Christianity was confined to the literate villa-owners of the urban aristocracy (Painter 1971, 156-175) (16).

In 313 following the edict of Milan by Constantine in the aftermath of the battle at the Milvian Bridge, Christianity became the religion of the Emperor: the edict represented the first step in the change of official policy towards the Church. It is not until AD 391 when Theodosius banned all the pagan cults that Christianity was endorsed as the official religion of the Empire. The authority of Christianity had already increased progressively in the course of the III and IV century, following the foundation of communities in the Mediterranean area and, later, in the North-West.

The common opinion that the new religion would have been brought into Britain along with the worship of the various oriental deities (Lewis 1966; Green 1976, Ch. 3; Thomas 1981) has been seriously questioned by Watts (1991) according to whom Christianity would have been introduced as a Roman religion, following the historical development of Rome as a focus for the new cult: the presence of an expanding Church with its tradition of martyrdom (see St. Peter and St. Paul) and the well established institution of bishopric leadership, as it had been dictated by the principle of apostolic succession, would have placed Rome in a prominent position within Christianity. It cannot be ignored, however, that similarities in attitude to death between Christianity, late philosophical schools (in particular Stoicism, Neo-Platonism and Neo-Pythagorism) and oriental religions occurred, as Christianity borrowed and absorbed several elements from a common cultural *substratum*.

The knowledge of Christianity in late Roman Britain is notably scanty. It relies upon two kinds of sources, the written documents, in particular the bishop lists and the martyrdom literature, and the archaeological evidence from the investigation of churches, proto-cathedrals and cemeteries. With regards to the written sources, the evidence for Christianity in the III century is inconsistent: according to Tertullianus (*Adversus Iudaeos*, 7), Christianity would have been present even in the remoter areas of the Empire, including Britain. The validity of the source has been questioned by Thomas (1981, 43) due to the suspicion of elements of exaggeration. It was in the interest of the Church to emphasise the process of Christianisation and play down the evidence for a lively continuity of pagan practices and beliefs. With regards to the tradition of the martyrdom of Alban, Aaron and Julius, there is a considerable debate over dates (Morris 1968; Stephens 1987; Thomas 1981, Salway 1985, 720-21). Scholars agree that their martyrdom is unlikely to have occurred during the persecutions by Diocletian as Constantius Chlorus, Caesar in Britain, took little action against the Christians (Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 15.7; Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 8. 13. 13). From the literary sources nothing more is known of Christianity until the advent of Constantine. The list of bishops who attended the Council of Arles in 314 on behalf of Constantine to discuss the Donatist schism is still the most reliable source of information for the presence of some ecclesiastical organisation in late Roman Britain. According to the list, three bishops, a priest and a deacon from Britain would have participated (17). What would emerge is that at the beginning of the IV century the Church organisation in Britain was just being formed (Salway 1985, 723). Bishops from Britain appeared again at the council of Rimini under Constantius II (359) (18). Apart from the bishop lists mentioned

above, there is little, if any, written reference to Christianity in Roman-Britain for the period following the conversion of Constantine up to 410 AD (19). Therefore, it is necessary to rely almost exclusively upon the archaeological evidence mainly deriving from the identification of churches and features displayed by certain late cemeteries, in addition to the investigation of artefacts with symbols and inscriptions of a religious content (20). It is difficult to recognise IV-V century congregational and cemetery churches in Britain as the Christian architecture (rectangular and basilical plans or the simpler apsed style without aisle, and square mausolea-martyria have been recorded) developed in the context of well established forms, sharing trends with traditional pagan or secular civic buildings. In the case of the house churches, the evidence for which is gradually emerging in England, the main problem consists in distinguishing between mere houses owned by Christians and suites of rooms devoted to religious, in the specific case Christian, practices. As Ward Perkins has suggested, the early house-churches on the Continent would have been progressively replaced by churches (Ward Perkins 1954, 80). In Britain due to the withdrawal of the Roman army at the beginning of the IV century it is possible that they continued to be used for some time without being succeeded by substantial buildings. Congregations may have also taken place in open-air places which cannot be detected archaeologically.

The most recent studies on Christianity in Roman Britain (Thomas 1981; Watts 1991) have resulted in a series of attempts to assess the distribution of Christian elements throughout Roman Britain and the nature of Christianity in the IV century. From a quantitative point of view, the identification of several sites as Christian would indicate that Christianity was more widespread than hitherto proposed and its appeal broader. Christianity seems to have been stronger in urban than rural areas, especially in the face of the so-called 'pagan revival' which was encouraged by Julian to become apparent in the aftermath of the Roman withdrawal. The rate of survival of some churches, with the urban ones lasting longer, and the evidence from the cemeteries still in use, although in a condition of deterioration (Watts 1991, 223), may be taken as a proof of the predominantly urban character of Christianity. However, Christianity in Roman Britain did not remain exclusively urban, nor its worship confined to the elite: the religion does appear to have been somewhat more widely distributed, attracting a broad range of social classes (21). Moreover, there is evidence for a fairly high number of rural cemeteries identified as Christian and for a few churches. In general, the Christian communities in Britain seem to have been considerably smaller than those on the Continent, especially in comparison with the southern provinces. The fact that congregations were smaller may imply that

Christianity did not have the same appeal. Christianity in Britain seems to have attracted a smaller proportion of the population as a whole remaining a 'minor religion'. By extension, therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that the bulk of the population was largely anchored to paganism, especially in the countryside, despite the absence of evidence for new shrines being constructed (whether for adequacy of the existing ones or, less likely, decline in their attraction).

From a qualitative point of view, it is difficult to estimate the commitment of the Romano-British Christians as the written sources are inconsistent or, in a few cases, biased and the archaeological evidence may be of little, if any, support. The persistence of pagan elements is discernible in a form of religious syncretism as the result of the absorption of Christianity into the mainstream of Romano-British religions (22). The tendency towards syncretism in the expression of religious beliefs may have partly assisted the process of Christianisation, being, at the same time, a weakness which was responsible for the failure of the new religion to maintain its force into the V century (Watts 1991, 223) (23).

Christianity has been seen as the last major element of Romanised culture to spread throughout the Empire, including Britain, its success depending upon the extensive and controlled administrative hierarchy that characterised the late Roman state (Higham, 1992). From a strict materialistic point of view, a monotheistic and hierarchically organised religion may have been regarded as a natural theoretical basis on which the self-justifying ideology of the late imperial power structure could be founded. However, to evaluate the importance of Christianity and the effects of its diffusion does not mean to investigate just the development of Christian beliefs, but to take into account 'the emergence of the Church as an organisation competing with the state itself and becoming attractive to educated and influential people' (Momigliano 1966, 78).

It was not revolutionary for the religious authority to become entwined with that of the Roman state by assuming a political connotation. For example Augustus had promoted the cult of the ancient customs. However, with Constantine the opposite trend occurred, the emphasis being placed on current beliefs which through him became institutionalised.

The transformation of Christianity into a state religion may have contributed to make it attractive for individuals who were anxious to promote their career. The emperors themselves were involved in religious matters for reasons of State, personal interest and political advantage going side by side. The first visible aspect of involvement, starting from Constantine, resulted in the programme of church building under imperial patronage and sponsorship. Beside the spectacular cathedrals, less well known churches are documented. Most of the times their construction was mainly a measure of local prestige reflecting, to a certain extent,

a trend that in classical times had assumed the form of construction or restoration of public buildings.

With regards to Britain, there is no conclusive evidence for official or locally prestigious interventions in religious matters or for a diversion of public expenditure from the civic to the Christian buildings by the leading wealthy families. However, imperial interventions in form of private munificence do not appear to have ever been common. For instance, the epigraphic record of earlier building works undertaken in the name of the Emperor by his representatives (provincial governors and legionary commanders) or named civic officers seems to point to relatively little initiative in the patronage of public works. This mainly related to restoration of religious artefacts (Blagg 1990). Thus, absence of euergetism in Britain during the later Roman period whether in the form of church building or public munificence in general would reflect the continuation of a trend the roots of which can be traced back to the earlier centuries. With regards to interventions undertaken by notables in the later Roman period, the overall picture for Britain is one of religious patronage disconnected from the public role of the elite, as the evidence of Christian worship from the villa buildings would suggest (24), with the private sphere of social relationships and obligations embedded in the Late Roman form of patronage becoming the privileged mode for locally influential interventions.

### I.3 DISCUSSION

The dominant element behind the few topics analysed above is the aspect of compulsion which characterised the new state founded by Diocletian and inherited by his successors. The reforms of Diocletian are generally regarded as the *discrimen* for the massive tightening up of governmental control and increase in expenditure. A few centuries later, the insistent and minatory tone of the *Codex Theodosianus* (under Theodosius II, AD 438) and the *Codex Justinianus* (AD 529-34) seems to suggest a picture where an authoritarian form of government was still the main connotation of the Late Empire. In a sense the state became intrusive, the functioning of the army and the administrative apparatus being the main concern of the imperial policy. The army was the single largest recipient of expenditure (see Anon., *The rebus bellicis, Praef.* 1; Amm. Marc., *Historiae* XX, 11, 5) and the main *raison d'être* of the system of taxation which, according to the literary sources, reached levels of extortion. The bulk of the legislation was substantially finalised to keep the *decuriones* in place in their towns, tie workers and traders to their occupations and, above all, bind the *coloni* to the land in order to keep the system of military supply in place. Despite evidence indicating a tendency towards increasing centralisation during the late Roman Empire, there is the suspicion that the literary sources may distort the picture for their own interest. For example, in Christian literature (see Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum*, 7; Salvianus, *De Gubernatione Dei*) the high cost of the army, the heavy burden of taxation and social inequality are common places which make the sources suspicious of exaggeration. Moreover, as Cameron suggests (1993, 81-103 *passim*), the constant repetition of laws presumes that the laws themselves were ineffective. Finally, most literary evidence is pertinent to specific areas of the Empire (especially in the context of the Mediterranean and Eastern provinces) and covers a chronological horizon later than the IV century.

In relation to the towns in Late Roman Britain ( see above THE ROLE OF THE TOWNS), there is some evidence for a shift in the means of expenditure from the public to the private sphere. This has not to be taken as proof that the towns were in decline due to the withdrawal of the elite, a withdrawal which would have been caused by a loss of interest in the curial activity. This may simply suggest that changes were occurring. Town houses were still built and in use during the IV century. When added to the evidence for a decrease in the number of artisan buildings, the trend could indicate a shift in the function of the major towns whose main *raison d'être* had become administrative (i.e. finalised to the collection of tax and the acquisition of goods to sustain the army and the

bureaucracy), to the detriment of the political performance (25). As a result of this, the small towns may have emerged as economic centres together with rurally located industries (i.e. pottery kilns), without necessarily being in competition with the large towns but inserted in a system of functional equilibrium. The involvement of the small towns in the system of tax collection on a large scale has still to be proved. The economic growth of the minor towns, allowing for such a growth to have taken place, did not occur at the expense of the large towns where development and suburban occupation are apparent at least until the later IV century (Esmonde Cleary 1987 & 1989). There is no compelling evidence for them having lost their primary function as the administrative centres of their *civitates* responsible for the raising of taxation and as foci of economy and service areas (26). Moreover, the distribution of pottery kilns away from the major towns shows a shift of emphasis not to the minor towns, but to rural locations, whether in the context of a different kind of market strategy involving the *civitas* capitals and their network of minor towns (Esmonde Cleary, 1989) or in relation to a more functional physical and geographical location. Finally, the villas were still in the orbit of the major towns and linked to them both socially and economically.

The discussion on the administration has been conditioned by the interpretation of written sources referring to other parts of the Empire, giving the impression that the *curiales* were increasingly unwilling to shoulder the burden of civic office (archaeologically, the absence of new public buildings and the dereliction or changed function of pre-existing ones have been taken as a proof for this [Millett 1990; Johnson 1980; Higham 1992]). However, the phenomenon could indicate the absence of an enthusiastic participation by the curial class (Esmonde Cleary 1989) in relation to the growing interference of the state through the renewed bureaucratic system, or be simply the result of the almost complete cessation of the traditional forms of euergetism in the context of an intrusive, although weakened, form of government. With regards to the countryside, there is no evidence that a process of estate consolidation was occurring to the detriment of the peasantry, as Higham would suggest (*ibid.*). Following the reasoning of Esmonde Cleary (*ibid.*) or Johnson (*ibid.*) it is possible that the traditional form of patronage did not cease in the later empire. Branigan (1977b, 87-92) has extended the analysis of the potential tenorial aspects embedded in the villa economies identifying three kinds of relationships, between villas and farmsteads, villas and rural settlements (27), 'major' villas and 'minor' ones some of which may themselves have been tenants of the wealthiest landowners. Although there is no conclusive evidence that the farming economies were of a tenorial kind (i.e. that the villas and the closest rural farms were part of the same estate), it has

been observed that rural sites located in the proximity of certain villas seem to have had a distinct advantage based upon their position, as shown by the evidence of rural reorganisation. In this case, a form of tenurial relationship may have subsisted resulting in an economic strategy (and, it might be added, in a series of obligations) from which both villa owners and tenants would have gained convenience in the context of the estate. This relationship of mutual obligations would have resulted in patronage.

In the Late Empire the state made repeated attempts to declare private patronage as an illicit appropriation of authority by those who took it on. As already seen above, in Late Roman Britain the traditional form of patronage-euergetism towards the construction of urban public buildings and facilities declined progressively and, unlike on the Continent, the expenditure by local wealthy families did not result in wealth being diverted into churches and their furnishing. In Britain, on the other hand, evidence would point to the growing strength of a local form of patronage, probably rooted in the Iron Age. This manifests itself in the relationship between villas and non-villa sites in the context of the estates. It is not a coincidence that in Britain a few villas also became the centres of Christian worship and related religious practices.

The strengthening of local forms of social display stems from the historical background of Late Roman Britain. Besides the absence of a powerful official Church, two phenomena which did not take place in the island are respectively the settlement of Germanic people on a large scale (28) and the foundation of an imperial court. With reference to the latter, the establishment of a court in North Gaul in the III century benefited the Gallic Provinces as a whole, in both providing security against the pressure of the Germanic settlers and invaders, and offering immediate access to the generosity of the emperor. On the other hand, the presence of the imperial court interfered in the traditional system of prestige and authority due to control being exerted by the emperor over appointments to all positions in the administration as well as grants of senatorial status (Van Dam 1985, Ch. 2 *passim*). Thus, the fundamental characteristics of the hierarchy of personal relationships rooted in Pre-Roman times and partly absorbed into the Roman form of relationship between *patronus* and *clientes* (which was also governed by a net-work of reciprocal obligations), were obscured beneath the presence of the imperial court, to become predominant again with the withdrawal of the emperor. On the Continent as a whole the different forms of patronage and their uneasy relationships emerged in a period of state weakness, conflicts and social competition mainly caused by the emergence of new figures of civic servants, bishops and military officers on the socio-political scene and by the



progressive integration of the Germanic element. In Britain social competition assumed a different connotation partly due to the lack of a court, or any other material manifestations to be related to the presence of the emperor, which did not provide incentive for rivalry. With regards to the administrative system, at a local level the late Romano-British towns were no longer perceived as the privileged arena for social competition. However, the link between architectural munificence in Roman Britain and civic authorities should not be overestimated. As Blagg observes, a comparison with the situation for the Mediterranean area reveals that in the northern Provinces the traditional mode of expressing individual municipal euergetism was replaced by a form of collective initiative (as in north Gaul) and by military benefactions (as in Germany), with Britain displaying the features of its neighbouring areas (Blagg 1990) (29). Even when allowing for limitations that may derive from the degree of preservation and availability of the epigraphic material from Roman Britain together with the difficulty of relating the preserved inscriptions to known surviving buildings, the evidence seems to suggest that individual civic officers were not among the usual (named) benefactors whether in relation to secular or religious (pagan and Christian) building programmes. The evidence may indicate that power was concentrated in the hands of a small minority comprising leaders of the Pre-Roman tribes and their descendants. As power was firmly held, there was no need to compete (Millett 1990, 81-82). Therefore the wealth for social display, more often collective than individual, could be employed to provide the towns with the standard Roman facilities as a means of reinforcing the status of the elite not so much within the social group but in the eyes of the Roman authority.

To infer dereliction of civic curial duties in the course of the IV century from the absence of apparent interventions towards construction or restoration of public buildings means to underestimate the complexity of the phenomenon of munificence in Britain as well as the more general problems concerning the mode of urban planning and intervention in the Province immediately after the Roman conquest and in the course of the following centuries. In spite of this, dereliction or change in function of certain public buildings seem to have occurred, although the phenomenon was probably less widespread than has been sometimes proposed (Reece 1980). Local duties may have still been perceived as duties but not as a means of social display, a fact partly to be attributed to the weakness of the bureaucratic apparatus in comparison with the vast and fragmented area the state was attempting to control. As a result, the underlying form of social relationships seems to have re-emerged above the traditional *Romanitas*, assuming different emphasis according to the different local *substrata*. The phenomenon, however, did not take the form of a 'Celtic renaissance' which

would imply a conscious attitude towards the rediscovery of a native past. The strengthening of Pre-Roman traditional social forms was not consciously perceived: it is true that a decline of intervention in the form of public buildings and monuments occurred together with a new expression of the curial class in the private sphere (i.e. the residential buildings in town and rural villas were the new means to communicate status). The trend was, to a certain degree, a reflection of the change which was occurring in the traditional Roman stratification as a whole: status was not the dominant element regulating access to power anymore becoming 'increasingly meaningless when separated from land owning' (Wickham 1984, 24). Yet, the town-houses, the villas and their furnishing were displaying a romanised style in a fashion which was still dominated by the ideals of classical culture.

To conclude, the III century was a period of turmoil caused by barbarian raids and by isolated attempts to create personal forms of power. The restoration of order appears to have been central in the policy of the late Emperors. In particular, Constantine had to conciliate the need to restore order with the need to legitimate his personal power. The adoption of Christianity as the personal religion of the Emperor together with the recourse to the so-called "popular art" from the provinces indicates that new means of expressing power had been introduced. However, the traditional form of power, i.e. the Principate, was still in place: the classic Empire had 'failed', thus the classic forms of propaganda had lost strength. This does not imply the rejection of classical culture, for classical culture and education were still looked upon as the quintessence of *Romanitas* with current beliefs and trends simply becoming institutionalised.

The appearance of the inhumation cemeteries coincides with a period of latent spiritual dissatisfaction followed by turmoil and uncertainty and hence restoration. The growing tendency towards standardisation in burial may have been the result of bureaucratic control over the cemeteries together with the circulation of religious beliefs but, more deeply, it may have represented the attempt to express a recognised identity within the Empire under the new aegis of Christianity, at least in many areas of the Empire. This would explain the fairly rapid diffusion of inhumation as the dominant burial practice. On the surface, order within the cemetery (that is the orderly deposition of the body and care for the burial) may have reflected an anxiety for order, at least after death, to compensate for the period of uncertainty temporarily adjusted by the efforts of single personalities. Following the restoration of order by Diocletian, the Empire was kept together by the charisma and action of individual figures. However, organisation and order on the surface appear to have masked an underlying

feeling of instability, the perception of instability leading to seek consolation in the afterlife beliefs and giving rise to the proliferation of the oriental religions as forms of escapism into the irrational.

Although less affected than other areas of the Empire in terms of the changes brought about by the barbarian settlers, the new social conflicts on the Continent and the diffusion of Christianity, Britain benefited from the same renewed emphasis on the *restoratio ordinis* and from the changed political and social climate. In particular, the new role assumed by the large towns as foci for identity projection might explain phenomena such as the layout of urban extended cemeteries during the IV century, the intervention on the city walls and the construction of villas which had become the most apparent form of wealth display. The organisation of the cemeteries may have resulted from the intervention of the authorities within the general policy of order but it may have also represented a response by the subjects to express spiritual tension towards order in the afterlife and, at the same time, their sense of belonging to the Roman institution, the town.

As we shall see in the course of the next chapters, it is the ideal of classical culture or, more specifically, the interaction of Romanitas and the Celtic *substratum* to represent one of the key concepts for the interpretation of the 'new' attitude towards burial in late Roman Britain. Notwithstanding the impact produced by the diffusion of fashionable trends from the Continent, the changes which were affecting late Roman Britain had been set in motion at least two centuries earlier, with Romanisation providing the common background for the development and diffusion of local traits.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER I

(1) See e.g. Biddle, M. 1976. 'Towns'. D. M. Wilson (ed.): 99-150. *The archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*. London; Frere, S. 1991 *Britannia*: 368. According to Biddle and Frere the late Romano-British towns were substantially unchanged and untouched by the general crisis of the III century.

(2) See Reece, R. 1980. 'Town and Country: the End of Roman Britain'. *World Archaeology* 12: 77-92. According to Reece, the late towns were nothing more than shrunken administrative centres and totally irrelevant for social needs.

(3) Very few Mediterranean ship wrecks have produced evidence for cargoes comprising pottery alone. Even the Samian cargo found at Pudding Pan Rock consisted of *tegulae* as well as pottery (Smith 1907).

(4) From the III century regular trading contacts witnessed a contraction partly as a result of the declining military presence in Britain, the largest item of public expenditure which, during the Principate, had determined an outflow of wealth from the core to the periphery of the Empire. Additionally, as the army was increasingly being paid in kind, the availability of cash for the purchase of luxuries may have been reduced. See James, J. 1984. 'Britain and the Late Roman Army'. T. F. C. Blagg & A. C. King (eds.). *Military and Civilian in Roman Britain*. BAR British Series 136: 164-189.

(5) According to Hodder (Hodder, I. 1979. 'Pre-Roman and Romano-British Tribal Economies'. B. C. Burnham & H. B. Johnson (eds.), *Invasion and Response: the Case of Roman Britain*. BAR British Series 73: 189-196), the products of the pottery industry in the Earlier Empire were limited to the sphere of influence of single markets, usually *civitas* capitals, so that the distribution tended to coincide with their sphere of dominance; this would have resulted from the control of marketing by the *civitas* elite. The bulk of exchange was thus embedded within social relations. In the later Empire, the breakdown of this pattern as a result of the reduction in the authority of the elite caused the exchange to become free from social control and the market to grow. The idea of a free market in the Late Roman period has been rejected on the basis of several factors. Millett (1990) has suggested that some of the pottery distributions were still closely related to the pre-existing boundaries. For instance, the distribution of Oxfordshire ware would have occurred through markets that, far from being free, remained in the control of the tribal elite who could accept (as in the case of the Dobunni) or reject (as in the case of the Corieltauvi) a particular product in their network.

In more general terms, the fact that much trade was controlled by the state, the church and the land owners gives rise to doubts over the extent to which the late Roman economy was outside the influence of powerful groups. Finally, assuming that low value bronze coinage was primarily minted for the use of the administration (to buy back gold and silver coins or bullion circulating through the mechanism of taxation) and that only secondarily it was used for day-to-day transactions, much exchange in later Roman Britain was still embedded within the administrative system rather than being part of a free market economy (Hingley 1982, 17-52; Reece 1984, 144-146).

(6) Esmonde Cleary (1989) observes that the New Forest kilns, for example, were well placed for access to the *civitas* capitals of Chichester, Dorchester, Silchester and Winchester with their associated small towns, and that the Oxfordshire kilns were located between the small towns of Alchester and Dorchester on Thames, and midway between Cirencester and Verulamium. However, with regards to grey ware, it would appear that the distribution system was not always mediated through the towns (in this case there might have been a direct producer/consumer relationship, without the intervention of *negotiatores*).

(7) According to Millett (1990), the limitation of mosaics to one single *civitas* or tribal area could reflect a trend towards social grouping expressed through the recourse to particular sets of artistic forms or symbols. Millett's view is inserted in the more general thesis according to which social relations created in the Pre-Roman Iron Age (PRIA) survived throughout the period of Roman occupation. Branigan (1991) has recently questioned Millett's hypothesis on the basis of several factors: namely, the feature which distinguished one school from the other is not limited to the *repertoire* of subjects but is also based on style, design and choice of decorative elements. Additionally, the tribal distribution suggested by Millett is not dominant as a substantial minority of the mosaics are found beyond the territories where they originated. Finally, the form chosen to express social identity (i.e. the mosaics) is foreign to Pre-Roman Britain, indicating a display of wealth and classical culture. Branigan has extended the analysis of the distribution pattern of the mosaics identifying service areas. Unlike marketing areas around major towns which were constrained by both the expense of transporting heavy and fragile product and the relatively low value of the product itself (see Hodder 1974, 340-59), the service areas are shown to be considerably larger; furthermore, whereas small towns could act as market centres, services remained a prerogative of the major urban centres.

(8) The evidence seems to point to the almost complete cessation of the construction or maintenance of public buildings after the II century and, therefore, to a partial demise of the traditional social and political functions of the towns.

For example, the *forum-basilica* complex at Silchester had changed function in the later III century and was used for industrial activity, namely iron working. The Exeter and London baths

were demolished in the III and IV century respectively not to be replaced. The same applies to the *Wroxeter forum-basilica* complex and baths which were destroyed by fire in the early IV century (Mackreth 1987, *passim*).

(9) It is possible that large tracts of land were granted away to those with access to imperial patronage; as the Romano-British aristocracy barely featured among the imperial elite, the land would have passed in the hands of absentee outsiders (see e.g.. Melania the Younger who in 405 AD sold the property in Britain for charity [Vita Melaniae]). As a result, perpetual non residence may have discouraged such owners from investing money in the villa residences or others may have suffered from engrossment of several estates to a single larger unit (see also note 12, below). The only literary reference to Britain concerning Melania the Younger cannot be taken to generalise about the whole country and to emphasise the phenomenon of absenteeism as an endemic feature of the Late Empire.

(10) Referred to above in note 9.

(11) Finley (Finley M. I. 1973, *The Ancient Economy*) has argued that decline in large-scale slavery in the Late Empire occurred for several reasons, mainly the drying-up of slave supply when the expansion wars ceased. Yet, according to the late documentary evidence, slavery continued to exist at least in some areas of the Empire, although a precise *discrimen* between *servus* and *colonus* does not emerge.

With reference to Britain, debris found in the cellar of a villa at Chalk (Kent) included fragments of possible shackles in what could have represented living-quarters for slaves. Further evidence is provided by inscriptions of freedmen. However, slavery in Britain was not a Roman introduction and appears to have played a major role in the Celtic economy, the slaves representing one of the British exports (Branigan 1983, 160).

(12) See note 9. Additionally, according to the sources (Sulp. Severus, Dial. III, 141; Amm. Marc., XXVIII, 3-4) the British provinces appear to have been a frequented place of exile for members of the senatorial elite banished (?) from Italy in the IV century. Moreover, Branigan (Branigan, K. 1973. Gauls in Gloucestershire. *TBGAS* 91: 117-128; Branigan 1977 b), on the basis of similarities in plan between a small number of British and the majority of Gallic villas, has suggested that certain larger villas developed as a consequence of the influx of capital from Gaulish land owners, under the pressure of the barbarian invasions on the Continent. On the same subject see also Smith, J. T. *Oxford J Archaeology* 2 (2) 1983: 239-46.

(13) For Britain there is no direct evidence that a process of estate consolidation was under way; in particular, the historical and social conditions which had encouraged such a trend in other areas of the Empire do not seem to have been present. The estates belonging to foreign

landowners may be regarded as possible exceptions though the hypothesis of an outflow of capital from the Continent (especially Gaul) to Britain is controversial (see note 9). Senatorial families from Britain are not documented in the literary sources. In view of the fact that *senatores* and civil servants were the social figures to emerge on the socio-political scene by taking advantage of the tax system which enabled them to amass land through exemption from taxation and cancelling of arrears, it would appear that, by comparison with the Mediterranean areas and the East, in Britain social mobility and competition did not assume a dramatic character, nor did the positions of the *decuriones* alter.

(14) At Verulamium there is evidence for new houses being built after AD 367 (the year of the so-called *barbarica conspiratio*) with following sequences well into the V century (Wacher 1978; Frere 1987). At Wroxeter timber buildings appear to have been erected sometime after AD 400 (Barker 1981). Finally, at Ilchester the presence of the cemeteries in addition to the recovery of later IV century coins and pottery in the town centre show that activity was still carried out (Leach 1982).

(15) See Jones 1964, 1039 ff. It has been generally assumed that the population of the Empire as a whole started to decline by the III century onwards. On the basis of late juridical sources, historians have paid particular attention to phenomena such as *agri deserti* and shortage of manpower that, though being referred to particular areas of the Empire only, have been used to make generalisations. Additionally, the trend towards concentration of land into the hands of the emperor, the great senatorial families and privileged members of the Church, a concentration which would have reduced the number of *curiales* and small farmers (whether owners or tenants) liable of taxation may have made any abandonment of land a more serious matter for the central government. This would justify the character of the laws, due to the system of military supply being the main concern of the imperial policy.

(16) The hypothesis by Painter is the dominant one (e.g. Clarke 1977, 430 ff.; Wacher 1978, 324; Salway 1985, 726 ff.; Frere 1987, 371) on the basis of the lack of evidence for an apparent observation of Christianity in Britain before the end of the IV century and for the collapse of paganism. According to Salway (*ibid.*, 727), for example, the core of the British Church may have lain in a section of the IV century landed class (e.g. Christian owners of estates in Britain such as Melania the Younger and, to a lesser extent, St. Patrick's father). In particular, Salway observes that there are no city bishops from Britain after the mid-IV century, the Church being probably even more firmly in the hand of the land owning class at that stage. However with reference to Britain, there is no evidence of bishops from the land owning class, a phenomenon well documented on the Continent.

(17) According to Mann, Eborius of York, Restitutus of London and Adelphius of Lincoln or Colchester arrived in Rimini accompanied by a priest and a deacon who may have been representing a fourth bishop; by this, it has been suggested that the bishopric sees in Britain could have been based on the four capitals of the early IV century provinces (Mann 1961, 316 ff.)

(18) According to the tradition, the poverty of the bishops was such that the emperor offered free transport by means of the imperial posting service. The interpretation of the source is controversial: it might point to the existence of a poor clergy in Roman Britain, or simply be the emphatic celebration of a paradigmatic choice of poverty by the Romano-British Church.

(19) The presence of Victricius bishop of Rouen in Britain at the end of the IV century may be taken as further evidence for a functioning ecclesiastical hierarchy. It has been suggested that the reason for Victricius to visit Britain was the diffusion of the heresy of Pelagius, the activity of whom, however, seems to have started later.

(20) Based on the ranking method, Watts (1991) has identified the following churches as almost certainly Christian: Intramural - Canterbury Cathedral, St Pauls in the Bail (Lincoln), Silchester 9, Uley 7 and Uley 8, Richborough and Witham. Extramural - Butt Road (Colchester 9), Canterbury St Pancras, Verulamium 7 and St Albans cathedral. House Churches - Frampton, Hinton St Mary, Littlecote and Lullingstone.

The cemeteries with the highest score have been identified at the following sites: Butt Road II (Colchester) Poundbury Main Cemetery and Crown Building (Dorchester), Verulam Hillsfield III (Verulamium), Lankhills Feature 6 (Winchester), Ashton and Cannington.

(21) With regards to distribution, Watts (1991) has also reviewed the traditional interpretation of the evidence for Christianity in Roman Britain (Thomas 1981): accordingly, there would be a distributive intensification in the East with a low density in the area to the west of the Wash which has provided little evidence for Christianity (e.g. see the cemetery at Ancaster). A puzzling aspect of this distribution concerns the territory from the Cotswolds to Chilterns with no substantial evidence for Christianity.

On the subject of wealth of the Christian congregations, there is evidence for small objects with rudimentary symbols and inscriptions (e.g. the Thetford Treasure (Johns & Potter 1983) and the Water Newton silver-plate (Painter 1977b)). The churches, by their construction alone do not seem to imply wealth congregations; evidence of wealth comes from the house-churches (e.g. Hinton St Mary in Dorset and Frampton in Gloucester) in villas used for the worship of the villa owners, the family and probably the household. In the cemeteries wealth, in some cases, may have found expression in heavy timber coffins, lead lined stone *sarcophagi*, or family *mausolea*, though most graves were simple. For a detailed analysis of Christian motives in the mosaics of the Late Romano-British villas, see Branigan 1977b, 65-69.



(22) Syncretism and commixture of pagan and Christian elements in rituals are not phenomena occurring exclusively in Roman Britain. The episode of St. Augustine condemning the Christians who drank excessively over the dead and prepared feasts in the fashion of the pagans, is well known (*De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*, 34). Augustine was aware of the similarities between the pagan rites at the graves and the Christian worship at the *martyria* (*Confessiones* 6. 2)

(23) The effects of the so-called pagan resurgence are not always unequivocally detectable from the evidence of churches and cemeteries, as dating is not always possible. A more profitable source is constituted by certain small finds with a Christian connotation such as the lead tanks which were probably used in the baptismal ceremonies: the apparently deliberate damage or discarding of a number of tanks (including the specimens from Ashton) has been taken as evidence for the pagan 'revival' (Guy 1981, 275).

(24) See note 21.

(25) For instance, by the later II century London started to lose its economic position as the principal port of entry into Britain, based on long distance trade networks. The archaeological evidence points to a general decline in strip-buildings together with the appearance of dark-earth deposits possibly associated with horticultural activity. Similarly, after the middle of the III century changes occurred on the waterfront where former shops and an inn were transformed into domestic apartments. The fate of the contemporary quay structures, which do not seem to have been replaced after that date, supports the suggestion of a marked decline in the amount of imported material (Milne 1985, 144). Access to and from the waterfront was finally blocked by the construction of the wall circuit which must have displaced all commercial activity in the immediate area (Hill *et al.* 1980).

In contrast, the public buildings survived well into the IV century, probably due to the fact that London had become a prominently administrative centre (Esmonde Cleary 1989).

The late IV century witnessed a revival of the waterfront which is consistent with the evidence for occupation well into the V century (Milne 1995, *passim*).

(26) See note 7.

(27) According to Todd (1988), evidence for a free peasantry in the western provinces of the Empire appears to become more and more elusive. In Britain not only is a tenorial relationship between farmsteads and villas plausible but also between villas and small 'rural townships', on the basis of comparative evidence from Africa with villages close to and associated with villas. Direct evidence for Britain is not available and the relationship between villas and 'villages' remains

problematic (Miles 1989, 115-129, *passim*). Possible examples are provided by the sites at Lockington and Fotheringhay (Hingley 1989, 102-103). It has been suggested that some 'local centres' may have been the homes of 'coloni' or 'slaves' associated with a villa estate. In some instances, the 'local centres' may have been tenurially dependent on the villas (Hingley 1989, 117). It is interesting to note that some Romano-British villages display evidence for small villa-like buildings. These have been interpreted as representing the dwellings of village elders or bailiffs employed to run villa-estates (Dark & Dark 1997).

*En passant*, surveys conducted during the past two decades (starting from the Fenland survey by Hallam, 1970) have produced growing evidence for the presence of small and relatively large nucleated sites (or 'villages') in the Romano-British rural landscape. These sites would include certain 'small towns' and 'roadside' settlements. Some appear to have had Iron Age predecessors whereas others were founded in Roman times [e.g. Catsgore (Som.) (Leech 1982)]. The frequency of villages in Roman Britain and the Iron Age origin of many of these settlements undermine both a direct association between villages and official policy and, therefore, the argument that areas characterised by the presence of nucleated rural settlements and by the virtual absence of villas (e.g. the Fens and the Salisbury plain) were imperial estates (Dark & Dark, 1997).

For an appraisal of the evidence for Romano-British villages, see Hingley 1989, 75 ff. and Dark & Dark 1997, 51 ff.

(28) Sarmatians and Burgundians are vaguely attested in Britain under, respectively, Marcus Aurelius and Probus (Salway 1985, 549, ff.). In recent times, Malcolm Todd (forthcoming) has conducted an archaeological survey, mainly in funerary contexts, from which it would appear that the earliest phase of Germanic settlement, though on a small scale, dates from the early V century, before the waves of invasion. The new data might throw light on the problem of 'foreign graves' which have been recorded, at times, in the context of certain late Romano-British cemeteries. For instance, at Lankhills (Ch. III.2.i) Clarke (1977) has defined the presence of two groups of 'intrusive graves' on the basis of classes, typologies and positioning of objects in the graves with respect to the body. The first group has been related to people who arrived around the middle of the IV century from the Danube area and were recruited into the Roman army. The adult males were characterised by the presence of crossbow brooches and belt metal fittings as part of military uniforms, and knives; the gravegoods associated with the female burials consisted of distinctive dress fasteners. The identification of the second group of in-comers with later elements with Saxon affinities is less convincing, due to the absence of Germanic artefacts.

Clarke's interpretation of the 'intrusive graves' at Lankhills is currently accepted, though methods, and sometimes conclusions, have been criticised. Baldwin (1985) observes that the presence of 'intrusive' elements was not so consistent as Clarke suggested and that at Lankhills variation in the graves occurred as general phenomenon. Furthermore, very few of the deposited artefacts had a Continental origin. Millett (1990, 216) has drawn attention to the problem attendant upon the

identification of German elements, especially soldiers, who cannot be archaeologically distinguished from regular troops. At present, it is difficult to find conclusive evidence for Germanic settlers in Britain, especially in the context of the reorganisation of the Late Roman army, and assess the impact foreign elements may have produced on both culture and administration. The matter is further complicated by the absence of conclusive historical and archaeological evidence for continuity between the alleged early settlers and the later Germanic invaders (Arnold 1984).

(29) From the available epigraphic evidence the proportion of dedications by named civic magistrates is relatively low whereas corporate benefaction (including interventions of administrative bodies -from the province down to the *vicus* - together with *collegia* and military vexillations) seems to have been the dominant form of euergetism expressed by means of urban buildings projects together with named benefactions by military notables. The majority of the constructions was sacred in nature, with the civic and entertainment buildings forming a low percentage of the overall public work. The few civic buildings for which inscription are available seem to have been constructed *a solo*, whereas the religious ones do appear to have undergone processes of restoration (Blagg 1990).

## CHAPTER II

### THE ROMANO-BRITISH CREMATION CEMETERIES

(A Brief Assessment of the Evidence for Internal Organisation)

#### II.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the major features which characterise the suburban areas in late Roman Britain is represented by the appearance of extensive and internally homogenous cemeteries for inhumation burials. As seen above (GENERAL INTRODUCTION), the phenomenon has been sometimes related to increasing management that would have been exerted by the civic or religious (Christian) authorities as the result of the changes in the political and social milieu of the Late Empire. At the end of chapter I (I. 4: DISCUSSION), it was emphasised that Britain, although affected by the general climate of renewal, was substantially untouched by the events on the Continent, the situation on the island offering scope for the development of local traits within the process of Romanisation.

Notwithstanding the continuation of local forms of social expression (see for example the peculiar character of civic munificence mentioned in Ch. I), urban and extra-urban development in Britain took place according to criteria of Roman standard. As part of the planning process, the cemeteries were an integrated part of the suburbs. Therefore, not only the location of a burial ground in relation to the parent settlement but also the character of its internal organisation, at least in relation to cemetery growth and expansion, are likely to have been partially affected by development control. Whereas native ritualistic aspects of burial would have been more visible in hidden contexts, Roman rituals would have been more apparent in 'above ground' contexts. Even when allowing for some degree of official intervention in matter of cemetery regulation and internal organisation, one question arises: was the tendency towards standardisation in burial the effect of changes in the policy of urban management due the diffusion of fashionable trends from the Continent, or was this same tendency also the result of local and indigenous initiative.

In order to detect possible patterns of continuity and change through time and, hence, to assess the impact caused by the appearance of inhumation on the local substratum, it is necessary to establish whether management was an exclusive

prerogative of the late burial grounds or a common attribute displayed by the Romano-British cemeteries as a whole.

For the aim of the research, a few selected sites dating to the early period of Roman occupation have been analysed. A preliminary distinction has been introduced between chronologically contained areas for cremations only and long-lived cemeteries that display evidence for a mixed burial rite (i.e. with the rite of cremation being followed and progressively substituted by inhumation). The distinction is mainly functional as uncertainty rests upon the dividing line between the two types of cemeteries in terms of their chronological definition and spatial use. It is not always possible to establish how long separate cremation cemeteries were in use for beyond the late II century AD, as the first half of the III century is a period for which dating is notoriously vague. Similarly, it is uncertain how far mixed cemeteries may have originally displayed formal distinctions between the two rites. For instance, discrete spatial allocation of land could have resulted in the progressive obliteration of earlier burial rites due to use and re-use of the same parcel over a relatively long period of time. In view of these problems, an attempt has been made to deal with the cremation burials separately in order to uncover, where possible, their spatial relationship with contemporary and later inhumations.

A further section has been introduced to deal with early inhumation cemeteries, whether of native inspiration or subjected to Roman influence, which appear to have characterised the Durotrigian area (with particular reference to Dorset).

Within the general distinction between areas for cremations only and 'mixed' burial grounds, in the context of each single cemetery attention has been paid to selected internal features which may provide evidence for cemetery lay-out and organisation. Finally, aspects of location (or external features) have been dealt with in a separate section in the form of general remarks.

As already stated in the general introduction, the major limitation to the analysis of the early Romano-British cemeteries derives from a substantial lack of evidence from extensively explored areas in the context of both major and minor Romano-British towns. There are only a few major urban sites which have witnessed large scale investigations during the past few decades, namely the cemetery at St. Pancras (Chichester) and the cemetery at Trentholme Drive (York). The former is an area predominantly occupied by I-II century cremations. The latter displays a mixed character as burials started to occur in the second half of the II century in the form of cremations, with the rite of inhumation appearing in the course of the III century to become predominant towards the end of the century and beyond.

If the information available for the major Romano-British towns is controversial and far from being exhaustive, the evidence from the minor urban centres can be, at

best, described as ephemeral: despite the recent discovery of a number of extensive inhumation cemeteries dating to the IV century (See Ch. III), in most cases the whereabouts of the early burial grounds remain unknown.

Areas of mixed burial rites in Roman Britain may provide potential chronological evidence for the change in practice from cremation to inhumation (Philpott 1991, 58-59). However, the analysis of phases of development and changes even within the same cemetery area is fraught with difficulty. The presence of areas exclusively laid out for cremations (or inhumations) and areas for both burial rites within the same long lived cemeteries gives rise to a series of interpretational problems and questions which, at present, can only be tentatively addressed. Namely, why did some early cemeteries cease to be used and were not employed for later burials and, from the same perspective, why were inhumations often given a specific location in the course of the IV century. A further series of questions arises as to whether it is legitimate to interpret the attitude towards the formal disposal of the dead by a common-sense of explanation, i.e. by relegating non-contextualised human actions to the scheme of an original rationality. In other words, was the appearance of the late inhumation cemeteries simply related to the abandonment of the earlier burial grounds due to the re-definition of the urban space and the combined change in ritual. Was the shift in cemetery location an attempt to solve the problem of finding space for the growing number of 'cumbersome' inhumation burials? Similarly, could the size of the area available for burial together with the size of the dead population partially account for continuity of use of some cemetery areas and creation / abandonment / recreation, i.e. shift in time, of others? Finally, how far is it possible to go in trying to describe a normative type of cemetery within the definition of its chronological parameters, and if so what can be defined as 'normative' and in relation to what?

When posing these kinds of questions the danger of underestimating individually and culturally specific dynamics behind processes of change is apparent. Processes of change tend to be fixed in static manifestations of events which, from our present horizon of perception, appear episodic and self-contained and are often translated into a series of segmented 'normative-rational' definitions.

## II.2 LOCATION AND PLANNING

### II.2.i THE CEMETERY SITES

(Table I)

The bulk of the evidence used in the present chapter has been collected from a few selected sites. The criteria under which these sites have been selected are based on the following factors:

- Chronology of the cemeteries (from the early to mid I century onwards).
- Method of excavation conducted in the burial areas (extensive investigation).
- Date of excavation (from the 60's onwards, with a few exceptions).
- Number of burials in relation to the status of the parent settlement (e. g. major and minor towns\*).
- Availability of relevant information.
- Geographical distribution of the sites in a relatively broad area in south-east Britain.
- Areas for sole cremations and areas which display evidence for both cremations and inhumations.

As a result of the application of the criteria (above), the choice has fallen on the following sites:

- CEMETERIES FOR CREMATIONS ONLY:  
major towns: St Pancras (Chichester), St Stephen's Hill (St Albans-Verulamium), Hyde Street (Winchester),  
minor towns: Skeleton Green, Cemetery A and Cemetery B (Braughing)  
forts: High Rochester (Petty Knows)
- CEMETERIES OF MIXED BURIAL RITES  
major towns: Oakley Cottage (Cirencester); West Tenter Street and Eastern Cemetery (London); King Harry Lane (St Albans-Verulamium); Trentholme Drive (York).  
minor towns: Derby Race Course (Derby); Kelvedon, Area J (Kelvedon).
- EARLY INHUMATION CEMETERIES  
major town: Alington Avenue and Old Vicarage (Fordington, Dorchester)

---

\* The subdivision of the settlements in major and minor towns has been based on the evidence for the presence (major towns) or absence (minor towns) of administrative functions which, in archaeological terms, imply the presence or absence of organised town planning with space for public and civic buildings for communal display. Therefore, in the context of the present study the adjectives 'major' and 'minor' have been referred to the urban centres in a purely conventional fashion devoid of more specific economic and social connotations, with disregard for factors such as extension of the built-up area or population size.

A summary of these sites is provided below with particular reference to those internal and external (i.e. location) features which may provide indications of cemetery management.



## CREMATION CEMETERIES: MAJOR TOWNS

Chichester, St Pancras (Down & Rule 1971, 53-126)

(Plates II and III)

### Location

The existence of a Romano-British cemetery located 315 m outside the east gate at Chichester, on the north side of St. Pancras (Stane) Street, has been known since 1895. In the late Thirties *circa* 65 burials were rescued following the demolition of modern constructions. Further building activity carried out in 1965 provided the opportunity to investigate the cemetery by means of extensive excavation techniques.

Two periods of Roman activity appear to predate the layout of the cemetery, the earlier evidence being related to the presence of a military ditch running N-W and dated to AD 43 on the basis of pre-Flavian Samian pottery from the ditch-fill. Parallel to it (at less than 2 m away) a palisade trench was also recorded. Some time after the main ditch silted up, quarrying for gravel and clay was commenced on site along the western lip of the ditch, probably to extract material to metal the Roman road (Stane Street).

From AD 70-80 a Roman cremation cemetery was set out, the main use of which continued until the end of the II century with sporadic burials occurring till the late III-early IV century. The cemetery was subsequently disturbed when a further phase of gravel extraction took place probably during the late Roman period.

The military ditch seems to have acted as the eastern boundary of the cemetery. The northern and southern limits were assumed by negative observations. At the time of the excavation uncertainty rested over the extent of the cemetery to the west.

### Internal features

A total of 260 cremations and 9 inhumations were recorded. The former were mostly urned and furnished. Other forms of containers included stone and tile cists, boxes and caskets. As no evidence emerged to indicate a sequential development of the cemetery, the excavator suggested that the site may have grown in a uniform manner with plots distributed evenly across the area, their density thickening up as time went on. In connection with the process of cremation, a substantial *ustrinum* was identified on the basis of a high concentration of burnt debris (charcoal, burnt bones, nails from possible wooden biers and pottery).

By the end of the II century the use of the ground became more sporadic with a few inhumations and cremations occurring until the IV century. The inhumations were found scattered throughout the area, being mainly N-S and NE-SW oriented; the

body postures recovered included extended and supine with a few examples of the crouched position. The presence of the late inhumations was interpreted by the excavators as evidence for continuity of burial in family plots, although, in some instances, the inhumations were not directly associated to any earlier cremation. Furthermore, in one case an inhumation burial pre-dated stratigraphically a cremation which was placed above it.

A high degree of internal organisation of the cemeteries was reflected in the lay-out of the actual cremations on site, with little disturbance of earlier burials by later ones. Although there was no evidence for substantial surface markers such as tombstones and monuments, evidence for wooden posts and post-holes in association with a few cremations suggests that some system of marking the graves or the plots by means of marker posts was employed.

### St Albans-Verulamium, St Stephen's Hill (Davey 1935)

(Plates IV and V)

#### Location

The cemetery at St. Stephen's is located 700 m to the south of Verulamium along Watling Road. The site was explored in 1930 in advance of modern building activity and redevelopment.

The limits of the cemetery were not detected with certainty although it was observed that burials spread southwards - away from Verulamium towards the present position of St. Stephen's church - and also westwards - for burials were found mainly concentrated to the west of the Roman road and lesser graves occurred to the east.

A banked ditch running approximately NW-SE (for drainage ?) and a track at right angles to it appear to be the earliest features on site (dated from pottery sherds to second half of the I century). The ditch was back-filled sometime in the course of the III century with some grave groups near the brink being disturbed during the operation.

#### Internal features

Approximately 400 burials were excavated which mainly consisted of urned cremations accompanied by vessels (I-II century) with a few later inhumations (late III-IV century). Ceramic cists, boxes, casket and glass urns were also recorded. The cremation burials were found organised in groups, some surrounded by slots (for fences?), and others marked by posts. Between some of the groups cobbled areas or bedding trenches were set out in the form of shallow depressions which

might have marked family plots (Frere 1985, 293; Niblett 1990, 410-17). There was also evidence for two substantial small brick-lined rectangular structures on the same alignment which were interpreted as *ustrina*; a third *ustrinum* had already been destroyed by the time the excavation took place. They contained wood ash, calcined bones and iron nails. One of the two *ustrina* was dated to the middle of the II century, having being built to replace the former which had fallen into disuse. A high percentage of coin-loss dating to the late III-IV century was observed and interpreted as evidence for renewed activity on site, probably to be related to the presence of a few inhumation burials which were found scattered throughout the cemetery area.

Winchester, Hyde Street (Goodburn 1976; Birthe Kjolbye & Biddle 1995)

(Plates VI and VII)

### Location

The site is located immediately outside the north gate of Roman Venta Belgarum, between the Silchester and the Cirencester road. Despite the presence of a few scattered cremations dated to the III century, towards the end of the II century the cemetery at Hyde Street went out of use and burial moved further north between the Cirencester and Chichester roads, the northern limit falling some 400 m away at Lankhills along the Cirencester Road.

### Internal features

Circa 217 graves were uncovered at Hyde Street, of which 118 were cremations and 99 inhumations (84 infants and 15 adults) dating from the middle of the I century to the late II century. The cemetery displayed little inter-cutting of the graves suggesting that the burials may have originally been marked above ground by wooden posts or mounds, as no stone markers were recorded. The graves were aligned according to the major features on site, to the west end on the Cirencester road and to the east end on a N-S running ditch. The majority of the cremations were placed in urns with a few instances of box, casket and amphora burials, and were accompanied by grave-goods. Two major phases of orderly burials emerged, the first being dated to AD 55-60 (the earliest burial was accompanied by two lead-glazed vessels imported from Central Gaul), the second being generically assigned to the II century. These latter belong to the period of most intensive use of the cemetery with the majority of the graves being surrounded by square four-posted shelters set in a line along the eastern side of the Cirencester road, within a strip three meters wide parallel to it. At the North end of the site a square masonry

vaulted (?) structure may have represented a mausoleum. It appears to have contained a burial which was removed by later disturbance.

## CREMATION CEMETERIES: MINOR TOWNS

### Puckeridge-Braughing

- i. Skeleton Green ( Partridge 1981) (Plates VIII-X)

#### Location

The cemetery of Skeleton Green lies to the west of Ermine Street circa 100 m away from the Roman road. The site was discovered in 1969 and excavated between 1971-72 in occurrence with the construction of Braughing by-pass. How the cemetery related to the settlement is unknown, as modern excavations undertaken in advance of redevelopment schemes failed to concentrate on the core of the Roman town. Additionally, no evidence for any defensive circuit has emerged to date. Areas peripheral to the main core of occupation (including Skeleton Green) have provided more substantial information. At Skeleton Green occupation seems to have started in the late Iron Age in the form of rectangular timber structures. In the early post-conquest period, the site seems to have been subjected to planning and internal development followed by the construction of timber buildings (of unknown function) around AD 43. Unlike the area further south along Ermine Street where industrial and commercial activity continued into the IV century, occupation at Skeleton Green was short-lived. This seems to have ended soon after the middle of the I century, being followed by the creation of a cremation cemetery which remained in use from the end of the I to the late II century and probably beyond. Evidence for later activity on site is elusive. A few late Roman inhumations were found and interpreted as belonging to a more extensive cemetery to the south of Skeleton Green which has not been yet explored.

#### Internal features

54 cremations and 5 late, probably intrusive, inhumations were recorded. The cremations were dated to the I to mid-late II century. In the late I-early II century the cemetery appears to have been enclosed by a horse-shoe shaped boundary ditch which was open to the south. The enclosure was subsequently redefined with the addition of extra land to the north bordered by a new banked ditch (early-mid II century). In the latest phase (mid-late II century) the eastern and northern ditches were enlarged, the latter being also provided with an entrance, and an additional short ditch dug out to enclose the NW portion of the cemetery for exclusive cremations. These were placed in large urns, some made of glass, with associated vessels; a distinctive group comprised wooden caskets with elaborate locks and hinges.

The inhumations were unfurnished and therefore undated. They seem to have been part of a major cemetery located further south which may have been served by a cobbled track leading in that direction. The interment of the late inhumations caused disturbance of some of the earlier cremations implying that the location of the latter was either already obliterated by the time inhumation had begun or simply ignored. On the basis of the small size of the cemetery and the degree of order among the burials it was suggested that the site may have represented a private ground for the burial of members from a certain stratum of the society or selected family groups.

• ii. Cemetery A (Stead 1970; Partridge 1977) (Plates VIII, IX and XI)

Location

Cemetery A lay 200 m north of Skeleton Green along the western side of Ermine Street. To the south a ditch may have represented the original boundary of the burial ground.

Internal features

In advance of the construction of the by-pass, five cremations were recently rescued, three dated to the I century and two to the mid-late II century. They were probably part of a more extensive cemetery spreading eastwards. The cremations were placed in wooden caskets and urns, some of which were made of glass. Furnishing comprised a wide range of grave goods among which Samian pottery was recorded.

• iii. Cemetery B (Partridge 1977) (Plates VIII, IX and XII)

Location

Cemetery B is located 100 m SW of Skeleton Green, further away from Ermine Street in comparison with the position of the two neighbouring cemeteries (above).

Internal features

A sample of 104 cremation burials was rescued despite the condition of heavy disturbance caused by machining. The cremations dated to the II-III century and beyond (?), the earliest being mainly located at the southern end of the cemetery and the latest at the north. Although the majority of the cremations were urned and furnished, as a whole the burials appear to have been 'poorer' in terms of furnishing and cinerary containers than those in Cemetery A and Skeleton Green.

## CREMATION CEMETERIES: FORTS

High Rochester, Petty Knows (Charlton & Mitcheson 1984)

(Plates XIII and XIV)

### Location

The cemetery at Petty Knows was first located in 1975 in an area which lies to the west of the Roman road (Dere Street), *circa* 400 m to the south of the Roman fort, on a rocky eminence in marshy land. Evidence for quarrying (probably to extract material to metal Dere Street) emerged and appears to have taken place while the cemetery was still in use. Petty Knows seems to have represented a portion of an extensive burial ground the exact limits of which remain uncertain as no physical features were detected on the ground surface.

The fort at High Rochester remained in occupation from the middle of the II century until an unknown date in the IV century. However, the cemetery may have been in use earlier, since the station was originally founded by Agricola. On numismatic evidence the fort (and thus the cemetery ?) would have been abandoned in AD 314, probably in concomitance with the reorganisation of the frontier defences by Constantine and the withdrawal of troops from Britain (?).

### Internal features

*Circa* 100 barrow mounds (and possibly more) were observed, of which only one fifth was excavated. A series of square stone tombs and a round one have long been known to flank the side of Dere Street. They appear to have been built for officers and civilians (e.g. a woman, a *tribunus* ' child and a freedman), both closely related to the presence of the garrison at the fort. A similar variety of people may have been buried in the cemetery. It was not possible to distinguish between military and civilian tombs as inscriptions and grave goods were virtually absent.

The process of cremation appears to have taken place *in situ* with ashes being thrown in the grave pit or placed in urns. The majority of the cremations was accompanied by grave-goods.

Evidence for post-holes indicates that the graves may have been marked by posts.

Beside the mounds, flat rectangular pits of uncertain function (ritual?) were also recorded. They did not contain human remains.

## CEMETERIES OF MIXED BURIAL RITES: MAJOR TOWNS

Cirencester, Oakley Cottage (Reece 1962)

(Plates XXXIV and XXXV)

### Location

The cemetery at Oakley Cottage was investigated during the 60's. The site is located to the west of the Roman town along the Tetbury Road which was later deviated to reach the South (Bath) Gate.

### Internal features

The cemetery at Oakley Cottage contained 46 single urned unfurnished cremations and 9 inhumations. The two burial rituals did not intermingle, suggesting that a minor shift may have occurred in the location of the burials. The cemetery seems to have started soon after the Roman conquest and to have ended in the III-IV century. Due to lack of dating evidence and furnishing in association with the inhumations (the only chronological evidence being provided by a III century vessel from the fill of a grave), the process of change from cremation to inhumation could not be dated with accuracy, although the change seems to have been complete by the middle of the III century, with cremations occurring up to AD 200. It is uncertain whether there was a progressive movement away from the cremation towards the inhumation area or a break occurred in their period of use. The evidence suggests the presence of *ustrina* to perform the act of cremation. Burials were undisturbed, although poorly-fired with recovery of bones being most inefficient. The excavator has commented that the social status of the dead and related family may have been relatively low. The inhumations were also undisturbed. The skeletal analysis confirmed the evidence from the cremations as to the relatively low status of the buried population by revealing the presence of individuals who died young and had been subjected to heavy physical strains in life.

## London

- i. West Tenter Street (Whytehead 1986) (Plates XV and XVI)

### Location

Excavations at West Tenter Street were conducted in advance of building development during the early Eighties. The site is located *circa* 350 m away from the east gate of Londinium in proximity to a Roman road and represents a portion of



the Eastern Cemetery (below). A Roman cemetery had long been known to exist and burials have been recovered since the 18th century.

The earliest activity on site dated to the late I-early II century and consisted of a series of gravel pits and a N-S running banked ditch, this latter probably being associated with the Roman road or representing a cemetery boundary for it was respected by the early burials. It appears to have been filled-in sometime in the late III-IV century.

Burials on site started to occur during the early II century in the form of both cremations and inhumations. At least 120 inhumations and 14 cremations *in situ* (together with 7 or more re-deposited burials) appear to have represented a portion of a more extensive burial area. One of the recorded pits was cut through a burial showing that it was dug when the cemetery had begun life. The pit was dated to the middle of the IV century and seems to have been short-lived. The excavator suggested that it may have been associated with the rite of plaster burials recorded on site (below).

#### Internal features

The chronology of the cemetery was achieved by means of dating evidence provided by vessels which were used either as grave-goods or urns and coins. The bulk of the cremations and the majority of the inhumations were therefore dated to the II century.

The cemetery displayed evidence for general order among the burials with little inter-cutting of the graves (probably due to the long use of the cemetery and the loss of earlier grave markers). The cremations were mainly urned and, in some cases, accompanied by vessels. Given the relatively high rate of survival despite the occurrence of later interments, it was suggested that the urns may have protruded through the ground surface. This observation was further substantiated by the presence of shallow grave-pits. Few burials (inhumations included) were cut by pits of uncertain interpretation. They may have been dug by later grave-diggers to re-establish the position of earlier graves which had been lost to memory, in order to avoid causing disturbance. The rite of cremation seems to have been practised into the III century with inhumation continuing as the dominant mode of burial into the middle of the IV century (and possibly beyond).

Wooden grave markers were found in association with later burials in the form of series of post-holes and substantial superstructures (?). The inhumations were mainly confined, supine and extended (with two cases of early crouched inhumations being also recorded). Only an handful of graves were furnished (by means of pottery, glass objects, worn and unworn ornaments and hobnails). The burials were laid out parallel or at right angles to the N-S ditch (above). The ditch

was well maintained and back filled at a later stage in the life of the cemetery as an inhumation cut through it being aligned on the same orientation as the ditch. In the SW corner of the cemetery the organisation broke down: the further away from the road the graves were dug, the less the road line influenced their alignment. No pattern in orientation could be detected in terms of sex, age, beliefs and sequences of land-use for burial. However, eight plaster burials placed in coffins and furnished with hobnails and worn ornaments were found clustered in the NW corner of the cemetery spanning a relatively long period of time. It is uncertain whether their concentration was deliberate or fortuitous. They were generically dated to the IV century.

Finally, traces of stone foundations were recorded which respected the existing graves. They were located at the eastern end of the site beside the Roman road on the general alignment of the burials. They could have originally represented two roadside tombs for heavily disturbed II century inhumations.

- ii. Eastern Cemetery: General Review (Barber *et al.* 1990) (Plates XV-XIX)

### Location

The excavation at West Tenter Street is one of the nine rescue interventions and watching briefs within the area of the Roman cemetery to the east of Londinium which have been conducted by the Museum of London (Department of Greater London Archaeology) during the Eighties in advance of redevelopment.

The final results still await publication, with the exception of West Tenter Street (above).

The cemetery lay on a gravel terrace approximately 700 m north of the river Thames, adjacent to a Roman road, and extends between 150 and 600 m to the east of the city-walls.

Limited evidence for Pre-Roman activity on site emerged in the form of pits which produced Bronze Age pottery and generically prehistoric flint.

The early Roman activity on site took the form of a series of N-S and W-E running ditches which had subdivided the area in 'plots' of land presumably for rural activity. Some of these plots seem to have been given over to gravel and brickwork extraction. By the beginning of the II century the main use of the site was for burial. It is possible that the road giving access from the city to the cemetery was built in this period. The only evidence for a substantial boundary of the cemetery was provided by a W-E (?) running ditch marking the northern limit of the area. It appears to have been dug after some burials had already been laid out, following the layout of an earlier boundary, to remain static throughout the life of the cemetery. Some of the earlier ditches fell into disuse whereas others were maintained (see, for

example West Tenter Street, above) apparently relating to some kind of internal subdivision of the cemetery.

In more recent times, Medieval and Post-Medieval brick-earth (clay) and gravel extraction together with construction activity have obliterated large areas of the Roman deposits.

### Internal features

To the present time, a total of 104 cremations and 575 inhumations dating from the I to the V century AD have been recovered.

Cremation appears to have represented the preferred, although not exclusive, rite during the early use of the cemetery, with inhumation gradually superseding and becoming universal before the end of the IV century. It was observed that a higher proportion of earlier burials occurred in the eastern part of the cemetery than in the western. Moreover, in the eastern part of the cemetery there were large areas without burials, in contrast to the intense use of the western area nearer the city.

The cremations were in urns provided with lids. In a few instances the urns were themselves placed within *amphorae*. Some of the burials were accompanied by grave-goods (namely, vessels and coins). There was evidence for cremations being delineated by four-posted structures.

In connection with the actual process of cremations, a possible *ustrinum* was identified: it consisted of a large pit with brick-earth edges burnt to a tile-like state which contained charcoal, occasional fragments of human bone together with fire-damaged artefacts of I century date such as glass and coins. Similar pits were found elsewhere within the cemetery area. They inter-cut each other and contained animal bones, burnt and unburned artefacts. They probably related to the sorting of the cremated remains before these were placed in the urns. There was no evidence of cremations *in situ*.

The inhumations were mainly supine and extended. Instances of prone burials and decapitation were also observed. Bone preservation varied considerably across the site. The bodies had originally been placed in wooden containers (with two lead coffins and examples of cist-like structures made from *tegulae* being also recorded) and furnished, the percentage of furnished inhumations superseding the cremations. The grave-goods consisted of glass, bone, pewter and pottery vessels, worn and unworn personal items, equipment and food offerings. The burials were aligned on either a WE or NS axis, the former being more common. The orientation was influenced by the pattern of the pre-existing ditch-system. It was possible to identify discrete nucleated and linear groups of burials by shared characteristics of rite (such as furnishing) or by simple proximity and alignment. In the areas excavated at West Tenter Street and Mansell Street nucleated groups of plaster

burials also emerged which displayed evidence for crushed chalk being placed around the body sometimes to fill the coffin and encase the body. In the same areas mausolea were recorded, some of which, as at Mansell Street, were clustered in a line running NS and flanking a possible pathway, others, as at West Tenter Street, were aligned along the side of the Roman access road.

Finally, there was evidence for pits containing articulated animal joints of dogs and horses together with the remains of birds. It was uncertain whether the deposition of animal bones was ritual or due to practical purposes.

The cemetery seems to have been in use well into the V century.

St Albans-Verulamium, King Harry Lane (Stead & Rigby 1989, *passim*)

(Plates XX-XXII)

### Location

Excavations were conducted in the 60's and 70's in advance of a program of building development involving the site located between King Harry Lane and Belmont Lane, immediately outside the southern walls of Verulamium (Stead & Rigby 1989, *passim*).

Two archaeological features were already known, the Roman road from Verulamium to Silchester running N-S, and an Iron Age ditch parallel with the town wall and at right angles to the Silchester Road. Among the earliest features on site there was a large Iron Age inhumation cemetery (1-60 AD) whose relationship with the ditch (a cemetery boundary?) is obscure. Both cemetery and ditch came to an end following the construction of the Roman road. Evidence for Roman occupation emerged in the form of ribbon development along the western side of the Silchester Road. Occupation seems to have started early in Flavian times and ended sometime during the second half of the III century, the same date as the construction of the city walls. For the remainder of the Roman period little activity appears to have been carried out, the main use of the area being for burial which extended eastwards from the Silchester Road.

### Internal features

The cemetery was not fully investigated as grave goods were sparse and the bones were in a poor state of preservation. Trial trenches revealed three areas (R1, R2, R3) of Roman burial occupied by coffined inhumations (III-IV century) and cremations (Late Iron Age-II century). R1 contained 3 inhumations on the same west-north-west/east-south-east alignment. In R2 23 inhumations of uncertain orientation were excavated. These had been placed in wooden coffins. Furnishing

(mainly vessels) was restricted to three graves. To the south west of R2 and in R3 there were respectively 3 unenclosed furnished cremations (II-IV century) and 20 urned furnished and unfurnished cremations (III-IV century) together with the inhumation burial of a child.

The presence of a fourth group of II century graves located in the eastern portion of the Iron Age burial ground seems to indicate that the Iron Age cemetery declined soon after the Roman conquest. Due to the limited nature of the excavation, the extent and lay-out of the late Roman cemetery remains unknown.

### York, Trentholme Drive (Wenham 1968; *passim*)

(Plates XXIII-XXVI)

#### Location

An extensive Romano-British cemetery has long been known to exist alongside the Eburacum-Calcaria (York-Tadcaster) road outside Micklegate Bar to the south of the *colonia*, the Mount cemetery. In 1951 further chance discovery focused attention on a portion of it leading to an extensive excavation at Trentholme Drive between 1951-59.

There was no evidence for Pre- and Post-Roman activity or Roman occupation on site other than that associated with the cemetery.

The boundaries of the cemetery were not established with certainty, although the Roman road seems to have acted as the western limit. To the north the burials appeared to be thinning out; negative evidence further north suggests that the cemetery did not expand any further beyond the limits of the excavated area. On the eastern and southern side constraints were probably posed by natural features as the Knavesmire which was a marshy area in Roman times and until a comparatively modern date. Thus the cemetery would have spread over an area of limited size which must have resulted in rapid overcrowding.

#### Internal features

A total of 53 cinerary urns, mainly unfurnished, and 38 patches of burnt debris (where the urns themselves had probably disappeared) were recorded. The burials on site do not seem to provide indications that they had ever been arranged according to any particular plan, even allowing for a certain degree of disturbance caused by later interments, mainly in the form of inhumations. The cremations seem to have been more concentrated in an area of burnt debris (charcoal, burnt bones, nails from possible wooden biers, fragments of iron and bronze object and pottery) related to the presence of an *ustrinum*. The rite of cremation appears to have started

in the late Hadrianic or early Antonine period and ceased in the last quarter of the III century.

After a period of 70 years, during which both practices were concurrently being used, inhumation became the sole mode of burial. *Circa* 350 inhumations, mainly furnished, were recorded although, due to the bad condition of preservation of the burials the sample may not represent the total of the dead population originally interred at Trentholme Drive. No plan was apparent and the orientation of the graves appears to have been random with (incidental or intentional ?) hints of sporadic alignments. In the area of the *ustrinum* which seems to have been abandoned between AD 178 and AD 270 the inhumations were predominantly N-S oriented including a burial in a stone cist (below). The possibility of a connection between orientation of the *ustrina* and that of the inhumations cannot be discounted. No evidence for plots or rows or paths emerged or for any surface marker with the exception of that associated with the crouched inhumation of a juvenile whose grave was covered by soil and cobbles probably to form a small cairn. The absence of surface markers may partially account for disturbance of earlier burials by later interments. However, from the analysis of the inhumations it would appear that whereas each single burial was laid out with care in the graves, some in coffins, supine and extended with juveniles often in a crouched position, lack of respect towards pre-existing burials, whether cremations or more recent inhumations, was apparent. In some instances the bodies seem to have been buried in the position assumed with the *rigor mortis*. Both sexes and all ages were represented in the cemetery.

No evidence emerged to allow the excavators to distinguish between civilian and military tombs. An *imbrex* stamped *Legio VI* and the *umbo* of a shield together with evidence for wounds on two skeletons may indicate the presence of veterans retired from the *Legio VI*. A stone sarcophagus containing a plaster inhumation (stratigraphically dated before AD 270 on the basis of the presence of a cinerary urns on the top of the lid), a wooden coffin inside a stone cist and a lump of gypsum probably from a disturbed inhumation (?) are the only evidence for the presence of more distinctive treatment of the burials.

## CEMETERIES OF MIXED BURIAL RITES: MINOR TOWNS

Derby, Derby Race Course (Wheeler 1985, 234)

(Plates XXVII AND XXVIII)

### Location

The discovery of the Derby Race Course cemetery in 1978 was followed by excavation which took place between the late 70's-early 80's. The site was located to the east of the *vicus* on the north side of the Roman road leading to the site at Sawley.

Evidence for I-early II century occupation predating the lay-out of the cemetery emerged in the form of pottery kilns and deposits of uncertain origin (agricultural or roadside accumulation?) which were part of the 'industrial' area of Little Chester dated to the Flavian period. The western edge of the cemetery was bordered by pottery kilns that seem to have gone out of use by the time burial started to take place in the early II century. As a whole the pottery kilns of the area seem to have declined at this date, with only a minority of kilns lasting until the middle of the century. Further west evidence for the manufacture of iron-work emerged. Negative evidence to the north and south indicate that burials did not extend beyond the limit of the excavated area. Uncertainty rests over the extension of the cemetery to the east. After burial had ceased sometime in the late Roman period the site was presumably returned to agriculture.

### Internal features

The cemetery presents two major elements: a line of five stone mausolea and a walled funerary enclosure and scattered burials in between. The mausolea represent the most apparent feature on site. Three of them still contained evidence for cremation which have been associated with the burial of officers from the early fort at Little Chester (?). They were set in the ground of former occupational deposits and built soon after the abandonment of the pottery kilns. A walled area to the north for both cremations and inhumations seems to have represented the major burial ground, although a number of cremations (2 certain and 11 possible) and four inhumations (probably the earliest on site) were found scattered between the mausolea and the walled cemetery itself. Three of the four inhumation burials presented similarities in the kind of furnishing which was dated to the middle of the II century. On the basis of the dating evidence it was suggested that they may have represented the burial of soldiers associated with the re-building of the fort at Little Chester during the Antonine period.

Within the walled cemetery (which did not lay parallel to the line of the mausolea and the road) *circa* 40 shallow pits with deposits of calcined human bones were recorded and interpreted as unurned (i.e. unenclosed) and mainly unfurnished cremations which may have originally been deposited in wooden or leather containers. Only a few cremations were found in pots. No regular patterns of spatial organisation were observed, not even immediately alongside the walls of the enclosure where burials could have been easily arranged in rows and lines. Even allowing for the length of time during which the cemetery was in use and the degree of disturbance caused by later interments, the burials do not appear to have ever been arranged according to any pre-existing plan.

Possible cremation pyres (*ustrina*) and/or *busta* were located within the walled enclosure. The excavators suggested that further pyres may have been sited within or adjacent to the cemetery.

A total of 61 inhumations were found located loosely parallel or at right angle with the cemetery wall, with no predominant orientation. A concentration of later burials was observed on the south-west corner. The bodies were carefully laid-down in wooden coffins supine and extended showing, however, evidence for severe disturbance caused by later interments. A few prone and decapitated burials were also found, mainly concentrated immediately outside and parallel to the enclosure or dug through the foundation of the wall (suggesting some form of exclusion?). Inhumation seems to have started between the later II and early III century with cremations steadily diminishing in number. The majority of the burials were unfurnished, making it difficult to achieve a firm chronology for the site as a whole and the individual graves. There was no conclusive evidence for burial activity beyond the middle of the IV century.

#### Kelvedon, 'Area J' (Rodwell 1987)

(Plates XXIX and XXX)

#### Location

Modern Kelvedon is located on the Roman road from London to Colchester. The centre has been tentatively identified with Canonium (It. Ant. IX) which would have developed in the proximity of the Neronian (and possibly earlier) fort abandoned in the aftermath of the Boudican revolt. A major ditch and a series of kilns dated to the middle of the I century appear to have been originally associated with the early military activity. The evidence from the kilns indicates that trade and industry declined at the turn of the III century and that the site economy reverted to agriculture.



A cemetery located to the eastern portion of the original fort shows continued occupation of some kind in the area to the south-east of Roman Kelvedon, outside the hastily constructed and short lived defences of the 'vicus' (late II- early III century). Evidence for Pre-Roman and Roman activity immediately pre-dating the burials emerged in association with a series of ditches probably related to military and rural activity. Burial by means of cremation seems to have started in the I century with inhumations appearing towards the end of the II century. Both rites, cremation and inhumation, were concurrently practised until the end of the IV century and possibly beyond (?), with cremation remaining the dominant mode of burial throughout the life of the cemetery. From the III century onwards the cemetery developed within well defined limits provided by the earlier boundary ditches. To the east evidence emerged for the redefinition of a pre-existing ditch which, by the late Roman period, had silted up with burials being interred in the hollow in the top. To the south the cemetery was sub-divided by two parallel ditches. To the NE of the main burial area was a smaller enclosure of uncertain chronology, the SW side of which was loosely parallel to the eastern boundary-ditch of the main area. Originally it may have represented an open stockade with secondary use for burial during the IV century. It may have enclosed a late mausoleum centrally placed among further inhumations.

#### Internal features

Circa 35 cremations, of which only 14 were undisturbed (by later interments, ploughing or robbing), were recorded together with 9 coffined, mainly unfurnished, inhumations, these latter being predominantly aligned with the boundaries, i.e. E-W or N-S oriented. A high proportion of unenclosed and a few instances of single urn cremations were observed. As a whole, furnishing was rare. Scarcity of inter-cut graves indicates that markers may have been originally employed. The majority of the inhumation burials in the SE portion of the cemetery were late III-early IV century in date. In the NW area of the cemetery there was evidence for 6 vaults, each containing a single coffined inhumation, dated from the late III to the second half of the IV century. All but two inhumations were unfurnished. One of the timber graves was additionally marked on the surface by a circular timber mausoleum dated to the early IV century. Later inhumations expanded in more marginal areas.

The cemetery was interpreted as a family burial ground, although not necessarily for the same family nucleus, given the small size of the population buried in relation to the long period of use of the cemetery.

## EARLY INHUMATION CEMETERIES

### Dorchester

- i. Alington Avenue, Fordington (Davies *et al.* 1985) (Plates XXXI and XXXII)

#### Location

Excavations at Alington Avenue were conducted between 1984-5 in advance of housing development on the SE outskirts of Dorchester, in a vast area of rural landscape which had already provided evidence of use from the Neolithic period onwards, in the form of funerary monuments and field systems.

The site is located *circa* 1 km outside the Roman town of Durnovaria on the road leading towards the South Gate. The chronology of the road is uncertain. A *miliarium* dated to the reign of Postumus (260-269) was recovered during previous archaeological investigations in the Sixties-Seventies. The mile-stone may indicate the date of restoration and not necessarily the chronology of construction of the road. To the south of the road a Romano-British inhumation cemetery was discovered. It was located within a D-shaped (stock ?) enclosure dated to the late Pre-Roman Iron Age which was associated with a series of Durotrigian crouched inhumations of adults and infants laid out outside the enclosure.

To the east of the Romano-British burial ground, structural evidence of use of the area emerged in the form of timber-framed buildings on stone foundations, enclosures/yards, animal pens, pits filled with carbonised material, wells and corn-dryers suggesting that some form of agricultural activity and processing were carried out on site from the I to the IV century while the cemetery was in use, without causing any interference with the burial area. The construction of the buildings appear to have partially obliterated the south-eastern boundary of the D-shaped ditch.

No mention was made by the excavators of the possible extension of the cemetery, although it is reasonable to assume that the Roman road and the sides of the late Iron Age enclosure acted as, respectively, the northern and south-western limits of the burial area.

Activity on site seems to have continued in Post-Roman times, as indicated by the evidence of timber structures associated with enclosures and fence lines together with two possible corn-dryers.

#### Internal features

10 crouched inhumations dating between the I and the later II century were found in simple chalk-cut graves. These were accompanied by at least one item of furniture

and were interpreted as representing Durotrigian burials. There was evidence for continued use of the D-shaped enclosure for Romano-British burials from the late II to the middle of the IV century. The burials consisted of *circa* 60 adult inhumations and 4 cremations, the latter concentrated at the NE end of the cemetery and generically assigned to the II-III century.

The inhumations were extended and supine, aligned along the south-western side of the pre-existing D-shaped enclosure to form an arc. The bodies were coffined, sometimes plastered, and provided with grave goods only in a few instances (approximately 30% of the graves were furnished), their alignment varying in accordance with the layout of the enclosure. Four cases of decapitation were also encountered. Finally, 7 infant burials were found inside a building (above) which was located between the series of inhumations and the group of cremations to the east on the southern boundary of the D-shaped ditch. On the basis of comparative evidence, the excavators concluded that the infant burials were late in date.

Despite the lack of an homogeneous pattern in terms of orientation, the cemetery revealed a relatively high degree of internal organisation with no inter-cutting of the graves and coherent spatial layout.

• ii. Old Vicarage Fordington (Startin 1981) (Plates XXXI and XXXIII)

Location

Excavations at the Old Vicarage were conducted prior to the construction of flats for elderly people in 1971 in an area located *circa* 130 m outside the eastern wall of Roman Durnovaria. Evidence emerged for the presence of approximately 20 Romano-British inhumation burials which were probably part of a major cemetery the exact extent of which remains unknown. Three cremations were also recorded. There was no clear evidence for activity predating the cemetery. A series of field boundaries and ditches was generically dated to the 13th century, although the excavator did not reject the possibility that some of the features may have been earlier and, possibly, Roman.

Internal features

The inhumations appeared to have been coffined, mainly unfurnished, laid out with no consistent orientation. The lack of any pattern of orientation may explain inter-cutting of the graves which occurred in a few instances. Significantly, one crouched (Durotrigian) burial was cut by a later extended inhumation. The dating evidence provided by the few grave-goods (namely pottery and coins) suggests that the cemetery was generically in use between the II and the IV century.

## II 2.ii PLANNING OR INTERNAL FEATURES: OBSERVATIONS

(Table IV)

From the few examples of cemetery sites illustrated above it would appear that management was neither an exclusive characteristic of the late Romano-British cemeteries laid out solely for inhumations nor a phenomenon restricted to the IV century. There is evidence for 'management' in cremation (and early inhumation) cemeteries, although both the extent and character of this management seem to have varied from site to site. In many instances the presence of boundaries, enclosures and markers appears to have been responsible for the careful positioning of individual burials or groups of graves within a cemetery. Whilst certain burial sites may have been subjected to planning, it is also true that other cemeteries do not show the same degree of internal organisation. As most of these latter had features in common with the former, the absence of uniformity becomes even more significant in the context of local variations.

### THE ACT OF CREMATION

It is reasonable to assume that the cremation cemeteries had to be managed for no reason other than to provide adequate facilities for the material act of cremation to be conducted (1). This may have implied a series of activities, some of which (such as grave-digging, cremating the body, sorting and packing of the remains) were undertaken on site and entrusted to professional *ustores*, probably at private expenses (Toynbee 1971, Ch. III). How the activity of the *ustores* may have been ultimately regulated remains uncertain.

Additional aspects such as the collection and transport of wood (or other fuel) for the process of cremation and, to a certain extent, the provision of *ustrina* were probably subjected to some form of control. With regards to the *ustrina*, their location in relation to the urban settlement as a whole must have been subjected to a series of rules ultimately connected with the general law which stated that burial had to occur outside the built-up areas (Cicero, below; Paulus, *Opiniones* I. XXI, *passim*). According to the Urso charter (Osuna, Spain), the construction of new crematoria within half a mile of the city was strictly forbidden and punished with a fine (Liversidge 1976, 220). Although there are no specific references to Roman Britain, on the basis of the available archaeological evidence, it is reasonable to assume that here too the *ustrina* were built away from the towns.

As seen above, *ustrina* have been identified at a number of Romano-British cemeteries in association with both major and (a few) minor urban centres (2). In the majority of the cases their existence has been only postulated, as at Trentholme

Drive where concentrations of debris of burnt material were found scattered throughout the cemetery and interpreted as representing one or more (?) original pyres. As the site seems to have corresponded to a portion of the main cemetery (known as the Mount), for the location of the burials was not continuous throughout the whole area but occurred in separate smaller units (of which Trentholme Drive was one), it was suggested that each unit may have been independently regulated and, thus, individually provided with facilities for the process of cremation (Wenham 1968, 21, note 1). Furthermore, at Trentholme Drive the orientation of the *ustrinum* appears to have conditioned the orientation of the surrounding later inhumations which were laid out on the same N-S alignment. This evidence suggests that the original pyre, although in disuse, could have been still regarded as a focal feature of special significance for later burials to cluster around it, whether for reasons of cemetery organisation or ritual continuity (3).

Concentrations of burnt debris similar to those found at Trentholme Drive have been also observed at St Pancras (Chichester), Oakley Cottage (Cirencester), London ('Eastern Cemetery') and, possibly, within the walled cemetery at the Derby Race Course.

Finally, more conclusive proof has emerged from the excavation at St Stephen's (Verulamium) where substantial *ustrina* made from durable material were recorded. It is reasonable to assume that at St. Stephen's the same pyres were used more than once. The communal use of the pyres together with the evidence for the *ustrina* being periodically replaced could be a further indication that some form of control was exerted over their provision and maintenance. Moreover, at St. Stephen's the crematoria were located in the same area, being on the same alignment. The use of the same portion of the cemetery for the construction of the pyres may have been due to simple reasons of convenience, mainly to avoid disturbing pre-existing burials. The fact that the pyres at St Stephen's were replaced in time and not simply restored, may hint at the allocation of areas devoid of graves and open to the possible 'shift' of the crematoria themselves.

Finally, the evidence for the predominant use of *ustrina* as opposed to *busta* may indicate that the act of cremation itself was perceived as a 'non-individualistic' event or that, at least, no need was felt for self-discrimination by the choice of individual pyres. The historical sources (above) place emphasis on aspects of hygiene, both in the literal and metaphoric use of the word. Additionally, from a practical point of view the use of *ustrina* would have been advantageous in the sense that smaller burial pits had to be dug throughout the cemetery to contain the cremated remains. Beside factors of convenience, what seems to emerge is the idea that a communal crematorium was not perceived as a source of contamination for the dead. The existence of a predecessor to the rite in the Iron Age may not be a

coincidence. Unfortunately little, if anything, is known about the modality and social significance of cremation before the Roman conquest of Britain. It cannot be discounted that the act of cremation may have been seen as a rite of passage through the destruction of the material body and the *ustrinum* as a place of special significance provided by the reiteration of the same act involving both the community of the dead and the living.

## CEMETERY BOUNDARIES

The internal organisation of a cemetery in terms of allocation of space for individual burials or plots may have also been subjected to some form of control (4). The presence of recurrent features, such as boundaries, grave-markers and funerary ditched enclosures, has been observed at a number of early and later cemetery sites. Late inhumations were often laid out in accordance with major features of the type mentioned above, resulting in apparent order within the cemeteries. When dealing with cremation burials, it is more difficult to uncover patterns of cemetery layout as many useful indicators, in particular the orientation of the bodies, are inapplicable or are lost for ever (5). The best one can expect to achieve is to find cremation burials which respect each other and are organised in lines or rows according to internal features, or to assume the existence of original boundaries on the basis of the occurrence of the burials in organised rows or lines, and lack of overlapping.

Boundaries in the context of a cemetery are a recurrent feature, although their ultimate purpose remains uncertain: most cemeteries were partially or entirely enclosed by ditches, hedges and roads. Artificial boundaries often took the form of major access roads, as at Trentholme Drive (York), or pre-existing ditches which were sometimes redefined, as at Skeleton Green (Braughing) and Kelvedon (Area J). Ditches were not static and modifications or redefinition made themselves necessary and sometimes were carried out, whether due to pressure exerted by the burials on the available space or to create space for 'special' graves (as, for example, in the case of Skeleton Green and probably Kelvedon), or simply due to the conversion of a former burial ground for other use. Additionally, geographic constraints could often impose a limit on the expansion of a cemetery, as at Trentholme Drive, where the marshy area to the South-east of the cemetery had acted as a natural border.

A more substantial and effective type of cemetery boundary sometimes took the form of a walled enclosure, as in the case of the Derby Race Course cemetery, in the line of a long lasting tradition well established in Roman Britain since the later I century AD (6). At the Derby Race Course five mausolea flanking the side of the

road were also recorded. Neither the road nor the mausolea aligned with it seem to have exerted any influence on the orientation of the inhumations in the open area immediately to the north and on the layout of the walled enclosure further north, the alignment of the walls being approximately on the Cartesian axes (below). In turn the walled enclosure does not appear to have conditioned the lay-out of the burials inside, as the location of both the cremations and inhumations occurred at random. With regards to the inhumations, although their orientation tended to conform to that of the walls (the burials laying parallel or perpendicular to them) no conclusive distribution patterns or chronological phasing emerged: N-S and E-W oriented inhumations were found scattered throughout the whole area, with the heads to the four points of the compass. The situation displayed by the Derby Race Course cemetery is not isolated: even in those instances where boundaries have been detected, their layout does not appear to have been always used as a point of reference for the internal organisation of a cemetery.

As we shall see, in comparison with the situation for the later period (Ch. III), the character of the boundaries associated with the early cemeteries tends to be more elusive. This even manifests itself at a number of sites such as St. Stephen's Hill (*Verulamium*) and St. Pancras (Chichester) where the spatial definition of the burial grounds was achieved by means of negative observations. In both cases, the apparent lack of boundaries could either indicate that the early cemeteries were originally conceived as areas open to unlimited growth or that former boundaries were progressively obliterated and not redefined, making it difficult to detect their original presence. The latter interpretation may apply to the cemetery at St Pancras where the presence of straight lines of cremations on the edge of the burial ground could indicate the existence of original boundaries (in the form of ditches?) which would have disappeared without leaving any tangible traces (Down 1974 or 1981). The purpose of the boundaries in cremation cemeteries remains unknown (symbolic barriers?). As we shall see, in burial grounds for inhumations they seem to have guided the orientation of the bodies, in some instances being specifically created to facilitate the layout of the graves according to preferential orientations (see Ch. III). As a whole, it is possible that the main function of the boundaries related to the zoning of the peripheries. As time went by, the need to introduce boundaries became more compelling in occurrence with the progressive development of the urban centres and occupational expansion of the suburbs.

## GRAVE MARKERS, SUBSTANTIAL TOMBS AND ENCLOSURES

If the evidence for the external boundaries in cremation cemeteries remains ephemeral and its interpretation controversial, little can be said concerning the

presence of internal boundaries to mark individual or groups of graves. The presence of internal boundaries, generally in the form of ditches or small enclosures, appear to be related to some kind of cemetery subdivisions. Among the sites described in the present work, the 'Eastern Cemetery' in London represents the most apparent case for intentional re-use or abandonment of pre-existing ditches to be surmised in relation to spatial organisation within the cemeteries. As in most cemeteries of mixed burial rite, the pattern manifests itself in the context of the relationship between boundaries and inhumations, at least as far as the orientation of the latter is concerned, leaving the situation for the cremation burials uncertain. However, if the argument of continuity has some value in the present context of discussion, it should not be discounted that an internal planning policy was applied to the location of the earlier and/or contemporary cremation burials alike.

The analysis of markers for individual graves is assisted by more conclusive evidence. For instance, at a large number of cemeteries evidence for the presence of some form of grave-markers to avoid inter-cutting and disturbance of earlier burials has emerged. Sometimes their existence has only been conjectured on the basis of the lack of disturbance of early interments by later ones, as at Kelvedon (area J) and also, to a certain degree, Oakley Cottage (Cirencester). In other instances more convincing proof has emerged, as at St. Pancras (Chichester) where wooden posts and post-holes recorded in association with a small number of cremations suggest some form of marking the graves by means of posts. The perishable nature of the material employed may partially account for the low rate of survival or complete disappearance of the markers in the context of a number of formally organised cemeteries (7). At the sites mentioned above, the grave markers appear to have been used to avoid disturbance. However, they do not seem to have always exerted any influence on the lay-out of the cemetery where the location of the burials does not show any specific pattern.

One of the best achievements in terms of cemetery layout which may be attributed to the presence of grave markers is exemplified by the situation for the site at St. Pancras where the cemetery developed in a uniform manner with plots distributed evenly across the site. Given the degree of internal order, it is reasonable to assume that the position of the plots was somehow marked above ground.

Of the cemeteries analysed in the course of the present work only the site at Parry Lodge (Gloucester) has revealed the presence of more substantial grave markers, such as tombstones and inscriptions. Tombstones and inscriptions appear to have been rarely employed in Romano-British cemeteries and have been generally found in association with the burials of civic or military officers (Birley 1988, 13). Equally rare is the presence of monumental tombs. The presence of five mausolea dated to the late I-early II century at the Derby Race Course cemetery is quite



unique. However, the mausolea may have not been directly associated with the later cemetery. They probably represented the burial places for military officers stationed in the early fort, conforming, thus, to the mainstream of imported Roman fashion. The same situation applies to the cemetery at Petty Knows (High Rochester), where a series of square mausolea and one round stone tomb for both officers and civilians were located along the side of the Roman Dere Street. As at the Derby Race Course (8), uncertainty rested over the military or civilian status of the buried population. The excavators suggested that the variety of people buried in the mausolea may reflect a similar variety of people buried in the cemetery, being closely associated with the fort at High Rochester (Charlton & Mitcheson 1984, *passim*).

*Ex silentio*, the scarcity of substantial tombs in communal cemeteries (with the exception of those associated with the forts) could indicate that the leading members of the society, for whom the majority of those tombs, when recorded, seem to have been built, were not buried in town, but in their country estates, at least until the late Roman period (see Ch. IV) (9). According to a well-established Roman custom (10), the mausolea at the Derby Race Course flanked the side of the road being located in a position of good visibility. As already seen above, they do not appear to have exerted any influence on the orientation of the inhumations which occurred immediately to the north or on the layout of the walled area further north, the alignment of the walls being approximately on the compass points with a partial deviation from the NW-SE course of the road. According to the excavator, there was no evidence of any building, shrine or major interment within the enclosure, although the greater density of burial within the enclosure in comparison with the situation for the open cemetery to the south could indicate the existence of some outstanding feature marked above ground which may have disappeared as time went by (Wheeler 1985, 251) (11).

A further class of grave-markers is represented by those square or rectangular posted structures (timber mausolea?) or by funerary ditched enclosures which have often been found in association with cremation burials in Romano-British cemeteries. At St Stephen's Hill (Verulamium) plots were defined by cobbled areas or bedding trenches set out in the form of shallow depressions; additionally, a cremation burial was placed centrally within a setting of four posts (Davey 1935, 249). At Hide Street (Winchester) series of cremation burials were individually enclosed by similar four-post structures aligned with the road and laying within a strip c. 3 m wide (Goodburn 1976, 371). In London ('Eastern Cemetery') four-posted constructions were mainly found in association with cremation burials (whereas the mausolea appear to be later in date). At Skeleton Green, at some stage during the life of the cemetery a short ditch was dug out to enclose the north-

western portion of the burial ground for exclusive cremations (Partridge 1981) (12). These markers seem to have represented a more successful means to achieve a form of organisation by involving small groups of exclusive burials placed around or within focal features. These clusters of cremations have been interpreted as family nuclei, as at St Stephen's, and/or burials of special significance, as at Skeleton Green. In both cases, the organised layout of a few selected burials could have been of social significance and markers may have been employed to emphasise the presence of distinguished individuals and their families (below).

## CEMETERY DEVELOPMENT (BRIEFLY)

On the subject of cemetery layout and organisation, a further aspect has to be investigated, that of cemetery development. The analysis of cemetery development is fraught with difficulty for, where firm chronologies can be established and the mode of cemetery growth detected, there does not appear to be a uniform pattern of development. For example, at St Stephen's the cemetery seems to have grown away from Verulamium, the early burials being placed close to the town, whereas at St. Pancras (Chichester) and London ('Eastern Cemetery') the earliest burials were located away from the town. In most cases, it is not possible to tell one way or the other due to the ephemeral nature of the evidence that does not allow firm conclusions to be drawn.

The analysis becomes even more difficult when dealing with mixed cemeteries, i.e. sites where both rites of cremation and inhumation were practised either concurrently or at different stages. In relation to these cemeteries it is possible to distinguish between constant re-use of the same ground over time, as at Trentholme Drive (York) or concentration of cremations and inhumations in discrete areas, as at Oakley Cottage (Cirencester) (13). The latter could mirror, although on a smaller scale, the situation displayed by those chronologically contained cemeteries where only one rite was practised as at Lankhills (Winchester). At Oakley Cottage, however, uncertainty rests over the chronology and meaning of the spatial distinction between the two rites in areas which might have been concurrently in use with a minor spatial shift involving the burials, or were employed at different times signifying not only a spatial but also a chronological shift.

The fact that most cemeteries of mixed burial rites do not show evidence for allocation of land for sole cremations or sole inhumations may indicate that the pattern of segregation was not widespread and had less to do with practical and functional reasons and more to do with the dictating priorities of personal choices or fashion (14). More simply, in some instances the pattern may be not always

detectable, the evidence being obliterated by the prolonged use of the same area for burial over and over again.

## II.2.iii LOCATION OF THE EARLY CEMETERIES

(Table III)

Understanding the complexity of the overall phenomenon of burial in Roman Britain implicitly demands an awareness of a cemetery as an organic unit with a beginning, a growth and an end. The beginning of a cemetery cannot be fully understood without the knowledge of the context in which the cemetery itself was laid out, making it necessary to conduct a preliminary analysis of the surrounding features.

Limitations derive from the fragmentary knowledge of the location of the cemeteries at any one town and from the often controversial nature of the extra-mural areas as a whole where the evidence for Pre-Roman activity or for Roman activity other than that immediately associated with the burials is often inconclusive.

### EXTERNAL FEATURES

The presence of Pre-Roman burials does not appear to have exerted any significant influence over the location of the cemeteries in Roman times, as the occasional reversion of Pre-Roman burial sites to other use seems to indicate. For example, at Verulamium-St Albans the presence of the late inhumation cemetery at Verulam Hills Field (see Ch. III) and the mixed burial ground at King Harry Lane, with disturbance of earlier Belgic cremations caused by the construction of an apsidal building and a road respectively, would entail changes in the sequences of land use. At a deeper level, the act of destruction of the earlier burial grounds may have reflected a deed of desecration. The erection of the apsidal building (a Christian cemetery-church ?) at Verulam Hills Field could have represented the material superimposition of a new cult. Similarly, the construction of the road at King Harry Lane may be seen as a statement of power to symbolise the authority of the new regime. At both sites, simple proximity of Pre-Roman and Roman burials does not necessarily imply that the meaning of their locations remained static.

Changes in the sequences of land-use appear to have been also dictated by reasons of convenience, as the evidence for Roman activities being carried out in areas which were subsequently given over to burial use would suggest. These activities were sometimes associated with early military occupation, as in the case of St. Pancras (Chichester) where a former defensive (?) ditch and, parallel to it, a palisade trench had subsequently acted as the north-western boundaries for the later cemetery.

In some instances, the cemeteries were located in open land previously destined to rural use, as at Kelvedon, where pre-existing enclosures and ditches were later incorporated within the burial ground. The example of Kelvedon may not be isolated. However, the investigation of many cemetery sites laid out in open land has often produced negative evidence for former rural features.

Evidence has also emerged for the location of the cemeteries in previously occupied areas, whether in the form of industrial activities, as in the case of the Derby Race Course and London ('Eastern Cemetery') or general suburban built-up expansion, as at Skeleton Green (Puckeridge-Braughing).

When considering the chronology of the early cemeteries at Skeleton Green, London and the Derby Race Course, a date between the late I and the early II century emerges for the cessation of the activities predating the layout of the cemeteries (15). In some cases, local resources were exploited and industrial activities carried out in relation to the developing urban centres without necessarily preventing the simultaneous use of the same portion of land for burial. This situation seems to apply to the site at Alington Avenue (Dorchester) where the cemetery was located away from, but in close proximity to, structures which suggest that agriculture was practice on the same site as the cemetery. Similarly, mineral extraction of gravel may have continued after burial had begun in the 'Eastern Cemetery' at London where at West Tenter street one of the recorded pits cut through an earlier grave.

## LOCATION OF THE CEMETERIES IN RELATION TO THE SETTLEMENT

Closely related to the question of the investigation of the location of a cemetery within the immediately surrounding area is that of the analysis of the context of location itself within the urban centre as a whole, bearing in mind that the evidence from Roman Britain does not allow us to know for certain how the extra-mural areas were administered or how they related to their cores.

*In primis*, reference to the location of the early Romano-British cremation cemeteries cannot ignore the phenomenon of cemetery shift in the course of the IV century. Relocation seems to have occurred at a large number of minor and major settlements, resulting in both the creation of areas solely for inhumations (at a time when inhumation had gained popularity becoming the dominant mode of burial) and the abandonment of former areas employed for cremation burials. The two phenomena tend to appear chronologically contained within certain temporal limits set by historical factors, the question of cemetery chronology being closely associated with that of the change from the rite of cremation to that of inhumation.

In the majority of cases the analysis of the phenomenon of cemetery relocation is hampered by the fragmentary knowledge of the whereabouts of the early burial grounds, especially in the context of the minor urban centres. There is only a handful of sites from which evidence can be gathered to reconstruct convincing patterns. *In medias res*, in comparison with the situation for the late inhumation cemeteries, in a number of cases it has been observed that the early cremation sites lay further away from the Roman towns, the cemeteries being set out at considerable distance from the contemporary settlement, with an empty zone beyond the occupied area in view of a potential growth of the settlement itself. As expansion did not always take place, the empty zone could be redefined and given over to later burial, accounting for the shift in cemetery location towards the towns, a shift which does not necessarily reflect a situation of settlement contraction. This interpretation has been suggested for a number of major towns such as Chichester, Canterbury and York (Jones 1984a, 37-38; Esmonde Cleary 1987, 26) (16). In other cases, the opposite trend has been observed, with the gradual shift of a cemetery occurring away from the Roman towns, i.e. outwards, as at Winchester. There, the location of the early cemeteries in close proximity to the city-walls outside the North Gate may indicate that there was no expectation that the settlement would expand in that direction. This observation is further strengthened by the fact that the late burial ground at Lankhills was laid out in open land formerly under cultivation. To date the area has not provided any evidence for occupation between the early and the later phases of cemetery development, suggesting continuity in the process of cemetery expansion.

## RELOCATION AND CEMETERIES OF MIXED BURIAL RITE

The two tendencies towards respectively the creation of areas exclusively for *inhumations* and the *abandonment of the early cremation cemeteries* tend to be chronologically defined. Their definition, however, leaves a chronological and spatial 'gap' for most of the III century.

Long-lived cemeteries which display evidence for both rituals within the same burial ground represent a different case, for the problem of a chronological and spatial 'gap' does not occur, at least in theory, due to continuity in the use of a cemetery. A comparison between the location of mixed cemeteries and cemeteries for inhumations only can be attempted bearing in mind that the possible implications concerning location are different in character, the comparison being between long-lived mixed cemeteries and chronologically contained cemeteries for either cremations or inhumations. The existence of both kinds of cemeteries implies the possibility of their concurrent use together with 'overlapping' of burial practices

from a chronological point of view. The situation is well exemplified by York where the Mount and the Railways Station cemeteries were still in use by the time areas for inhumations only were laid out (Jones 1984a, *passim*).

Re-zoning and redefinition of the urban space might be advocated to justify why certain peripheral areas had been converted to burial grounds exclusively for inhumations. However, the existence of mixed cemeteries indicates that spatial segregation of cremations and inhumations in discrete areas was not immediately urged. This seems to be suggested by the distribution pattern of the cemeteries to the south-east of Cirencester. As we shall see (Ch. III), the possible deviation of the original course of the Fosse Way towards the South (Bath) Gate may have offered the opportunity or posed the necessity to change the location of the cemeteries. Reasons of space due to the presence of quarries may have also played a part in the choice to relocate the cemeteries further south, with the creation of an extensive area for inhumations outside the Bath Gate and the abandonment of former grounds where burial by means of cremation and, subsequently, inhumation had been carried out.

However, availability of space was not always a determining factor for the relocation of the burial grounds, as it is suggested by the crowded character of the cemetery at Trentholme Drive where the presence of natural constraints did not prevent the continued use of the same parcel of land. This observation implies that together with logistic concern, ritual preference may have played an important role in the creation of areas reserved for one burial rite or the other, especially during the so-called 'transitional phase' when both cremation and inhumation were concurrently practised.

With reference to ritual preference, some potentiality is offered by the analysis of the mode in which space was allocated within mixed cemeteries, as briefly suggested above. However, when dealing with the situation for those urban centres which display evidence for the existence of separate areas for sole cremations and inhumations, it cannot be discounted that burial by means of cremation may have been still practised well beyond the end of the II century in areas which were reserved for this particular rite, and that inhumation burial started to occur in their specifically allocated areas earlier than the available dating would suggest (17). This may not only imply that areas exclusively for cremations or inhumations were reserved for the one rite or the other and did not constitute a mere function of the change in burial fashion, but also that, from a chronological point of view, the change in burial 'fashion' was not sudden (see Ch. III).

## OBSERVATIONS

From the analysis of a few examples illustrated above, it would appear that the location of the Romano-British cemeteries conformed to a general rule according to which burial, whether by means of cremation or inhumation, had to occur outside the built-up area of a town (Cicero, *De Leg.*, II 23, 58). Furthermore, town planning played a major role on both the definition of the areas to be given over to burial use and on the shift of the cemeteries in time. There is evidence that a high degree of control was exerted over the allocation of the areas for burial in the context of settlement growth, following modifications to the road network, the provision of city walls and suburban re-zoning in general. This appears to reinforce the view that suburban expansion was dynamic and subjected to continuous redefinition from an early date. The variety of situations displayed by the cemeteries in terms of location indicates that the relationship between *intra-moenia* and *extra-moenia* areas was more complex than one might expect, the location of the cemeteries both in relation to the urban core and in the context of the peripheral areas being often subjected to development control and related planning policies. These latter seem to have varied according to specific situations and applied with different targets in view. For example, the existence of empty zones between the occupied areas and the cemeteries in centres such as York and Chichester, or the location of the cemeteries immediately outside the city walls at urban sites such as Winchester, would suggest that planning of a burial ground had to consider the potential development of the whole settlement.

With reference to the minor towns, the 'local authorities' seem to have adopted a more relaxed attitude towards 'forward planning'. Nonetheless, the apparent absence of features specific to either major or minor urban centres would suggest that cemetery location was not necessarily conditioned by criteria of settlement ranking. In other words, based on the analysis of the contexts of location alone, both classes of sites appear to have been subjected to development and (re-)definition of the zones of occupation, with the burial grounds being rigorously located outside the built-up areas along access or service roads, either in open or peripheral land which had been given over for burial use. The fact that the cemeteries and the suburbs did not encroach upon each other would indicate that some form of control was exerted over the development of the minor as well as the major urban settlements.



### II.3 DISCUSSION

In the present state of knowledge it is difficult to detect a precise pattern of cemetery development through time at any one Romano-British town in particular or in general terms within the context of the province as a whole, as the nature of the evidence is conditioned by the differential rate of its material survival and geographical distribution. Rarely is there any possibility of reaching firm conclusions; therefore, any attempt at discussion can only take the form of a review of the available information. For instance, at York earlier areas of cremations were abandoned whereas others were maintained and used for later inhumations (Jones 1984a). At Winchester a progressive shift occurred revealing areas for cremations, mixed areas and areas for sole inhumations (Clarke 1979). Uncertainty rests over the extent to which the picture gathered from each single site may represent a situation *de facto* and not a mere reflection of chance discovery.

Despite the uneven quality of the information and the danger of pitfalls, it is worth trying to raise questions and open lines of enquiry. So far this chapter has sought to define the main evidence for cemetery organisation and, where appropriate, to offer preliminary discussions in the form of general remarks. In this section an attempt is made to summarise the principal conclusions and to consider aspects which have only been considered *en passant*. In particular, the continuation of native forms of cemetery organisation and the impact of the Roman conquest on the latter are inserted in a wider context of discussion in order to uncover social and economic dynamics behind changing patterns of 'management'.

*In medias res*, there is evidence that some of the Romano-British cremation cemeteries were managed and that management was not a specific or exclusive characteristic of the inhumation cemeteries created during the IV century. However, as we shall see (Ch. III), in comparison with the situation for the later period, the early burial grounds seems to display a higher degree of internal variability.

The long period of use of a cemetery and the limited extent of the ground available for burial are among the most obvious factors which may be advocated to explain the apparent lack of organisation displayed by certain early Romano-British cemeteries. In particular, the introduction of inhumations in congested areas of mixed burial ritual is likely to have caused the obliteration of the arrangement of the earlier cremations. This even manifests itself at the Derby Race Course cemetery and at Trentholme Drive (York) where the early burials had probably been long lost to memory by the time the last interments took place. Significantly, at both sites, although burials were disturbed, there was no evidence that they had ever been arranged according to any particular pattern. Moreover, at Trentholme Drive disturbance seems to have followed 'quite shortly after some burials' (Wenham

1968, 116-117), showing that overlapping of graves and interference could occur among contemporary interments.

According to Wenham, the cemetery at Trentholme Drive may have served the poorer section of the community who were buried in what was the most distant and less attractive area of the Mount cemeteries (*Idem*, 46). Certainly at York more richly furnished burials being laid out with greater care have been found in other portions of the Mount and at the Railways Station cemetery (RCHMY 1, 1962, *passim*). It is tempting to correlate cemetery organisation and status of the buried population. The question of the degree to which the organisation of the burials may reflect wealth and social status is, however, fraught with difficulty. For instance, at Oakley Cottage (Cirencester), despite the apparent low status of the buried population (Reece 1962, 71), the cemetery displays a certain degree of organisation in relation to both the allocation of discrete areas for cremations and inhumations and the degree of respect of the later burials towards the early ones. From a different perspective, the walled cemetery at the Derby Race Course, which does not appear to have been particularly overcrowded, has not provided evidence for internal organisation (Wheeler *et al.* 1985, 251). Nonetheless, its location in the proximity of a series of earlier mausolea flanking the side of the road is significant. It cannot be discounted that these substantial tombs for the burial of military officers, i.e. people of relatively high status and wealth, exerted some attraction and influence over the location of the later cemetery in what may have been regarded as a prestigious position.

If limited availability of space for burial and duration of a cemetery, together with the low status of the dead population, do not appear to have been necessarily responsible for the degree of internal organisation of the early Romano-British cemeteries, attention has to be paid to other factors which might account for the high variability in cemetery layout and, in comparison with the situation for the later inhumation cemeteries, the apparent lack of an homogenous pattern.

According to the most current interpretation (18), at the time of the Roman conquest, except for the La Tene III area (Aylesford-Swarling Culture) in south-east England where cremation had been already introduced by Belgic settlers, inhumation and, more commonly, excarnation, were the dominant forms of burial across most of Britain. Following the advent of the Roman army and the creation of the administrative apparatus, cremation was progressively adopted outside the south-east spreading from the newly established forts and towns where Roman influence was pre-eminent, its diffusion and intensity varying from area to area.

Planning policies were carried out which may have affected the native concept of settlement organisation, including the cemeteries. At the same time the first wall-

circuits were erected to enclose the settlement space. By the later I century urban cemeteries were established at a number of major and minor towns. The spatial relationship between contexts of deposition of the dead were changing, with the separation of the dead from the living as a general rule whereas in the Iron Age burial could occur within the settlements (below). Rules about pollution were reinforcing the division between the living and the dead.

The concept of formal cemetery in Pre-Roman Britain was not entirely new. Formal pre-conquest burial grounds of varying extension have been recorded in the South-East, in the Durotrigian area in Dorset and in East Yorkshire (Arras Culture) (Whimster 1981, 37-59) where their presence could have provided an entirely native inspiration for the major urban cemeteries which developed around the Roman towns at a later stage.

In Dorset, in particular, the continuation of the native Durotrigian tradition (Leech 1980, Whimster 1981, 256, 261 ff. with particular reference to the sites at Little Cheney, Whitcombe and Maiden Castle) is apparent in the persistence of crouched inhumation as the dominant mode of burial which held firm even in the *civitas* capital at Dorchester (see, for example, the cemeteries at Alington Avenue and Poundbury, above).

In the north, although there is no direct archaeological evidence of continuity of rite in terms of barrow cemeteries within ditched enclosures into the Roman period, crouched burials persisted until the III century. The degree of continuity of elements of burial from the Arras tradition into the Roman period are fraught with difficulty, as the 'Arras culture' appears to have come to an end more than a century before the Roman conquest (Stead 1991). It is however tempting to see a correlation between the Roman fashion of small mounds surrounded by circular shallow ditches with outer banks and the Arras tradition of small barrows enclosed by plain ditches in large cemeteries. The former type of mounds has been detected in the proximity of a few forts in the frontier zone (Charlton & Mitcheson 1984) and appears to have differed from the mainstream of *tumuli* tradition (with large steep-sided conical mounds with flat top surrounded by a massive ditch) although, according to Fawler, a regional type of low and small mound may have also existed, being more widespread than hitherto proposed (Fawler 1965, 51). Allowing for local recruitment and the existence of a local civilian population in the '*vici*' attached to the forts, it would not be surprising to encounter a Roman tradition of burials in mausolea and substantial tombs aside the presence of earth-barrows of a possible native inspiration as at High Rochester. In this case, the kind of cemetery organisation achieved by means of markers in the form of barrows may have survived from the Pre-Roman period into the conquest, taking into account that changes (still undetected) in burial fashion in the tradition of the Arras culture

together with its known geographical distribution may have occurred before the official arrival of the Roman army.

Not only the practice of cremation but also the creation of extra-urban formal cemeteries must have been perceived as an alien introduction in those areas in central-southern England from which there is evidence that burial could occur in a 'less formal' way in pits, ramparts or ditches, often within settlement sites. It has been suggested that a form of surface burial by means of excarnation may have been practised which would have left no tangible traces; however, at present, there is no evidence that formal cemeteries existed whether away from or within the areas of human activity (19). To a certain extent, the traditional absence of visible burial rites continued during the early period of Roman occupation and formal cemeteries have been predominantly found in association with the newly founded towns.

Finally, with regards to the South-East, as a tradition of cremation in formally arranged flat cemeteries was already established before the conquest (Whimster 1981 147-166, *passim*) in a fashion which was as close as pre-conquest burial ever came to the current Roman practice, it is worth asking whether native elements of internal organisation may have continued into the Roman period and, from the same perspective, whether the native cremation tradition received further stimulus after the conquest. When considering the *facies* of the cemeteries located in the South-East, what seems to emerge is a distinct character of cemetery organisation which may have continued substantially unaltered from the Late-Iron Age into the Roman period. In particular, the degree of order among the burials and the presence of focal graves emerge as distinctive features. The way of marking the graves by means of four-posted structures, barrows and enclosures represents a recurrent feature which makes it possible to define a regional pattern internally consistent in South-East England (Black 1986, 202-210), especially in the Chilterns (the area of influence of the Catuvellauni) and, to a lesser extent, peripheral to it, in East Hampshire (20) and in Wessex (21). What emerges is the presence of a well defined hierarchy of furnishing from unenclosed and unaccompanied cremations to display of lavish furniture (Philpott 1991, 217-220) related to a coherent mode of spatial organisation of the burials. The practice involved richly furnished focal graves within ditched enclosures being surrounded by more modestly furnished satellite burials as, for example, at St Albans-Verulamium (King Harry Lane cemetery; Stead 1969, 48), Baldock (Selkirk, A. & Selkirk, W. 1983, 70-74) and Owslebury (Hants) (Collis 1968, 18-31), suggesting a correlation between grave-furnishing, location of the burial and ranking of the deceased and his family.

The emergence of richly furnished burials hierarchically organised during the pre-conquest period has been interpreted as the result of the indirect contact with the

Roman Empire by the mediation of Gaul. Accordingly, this contact brought about widespread social changes which would have prepared the ground for the Romanisation of the leading members in the native population in the aftermath of the Roman invasion (Bryant 1994, *passim*). However, during the early Roman period, despite the growing influence from the Continent on the choice of imported artefacts and burial containers together with the increasing availability of manufactured items to a wider section of the population in the South-East (Philpott 1991, *ibid.*), the "La Tene III" derived practice continued to demonstrate a considerable consistency in the quality and quantity of furniture and in the way of marking the graves. This is particularly evident at Verulamium (St. Stephen's cemetery), Welwyn (The Grange) (Rook 1973), Baldock [The Upper Common Walls cemetery, site V (Burleigh 1982, 7-14; Selrik A. & Selrik W. 1983, 71-72.) and site A (Stead & Rigby 1986, 61)] Braughing (Cemetery B) in the Chilterns and at Winchester (Hyde Street) in Hampshire. As we shall see (Ch. III), whereas at most sites the provision of grave goods declined steadily both in their proportion and selection, native elements of cemetery organisation seems to have persisted into the late Roman period, as the evidence from a few late inhumation cemetery sites suggests [see, for examples, Welwyn (Rook *et al.* 1984), Dorchester on Thames (Feature 15) in the Chilterns, Lankhills (Winchester) and Kelvedon Area J (Kent)]. It would thus appear that the native population retained elements of funeral practice probably derived from the Iron Age tradition. From this perspective, it is not surprising that more Romanised forms of grave marking were never really adopted in the South-East and seem to have been confined to the military sites or urban centres (Birley 1988, 13) predominantly located outside the area. Tombstones were a Roman introduction and their distribution could be a reflection of the towns as the centres for the adoption of Roman practices, especially among the wealthy classes. However, in the South-East tombstones do not appear to have been employed reinforcing the view that a strong native burial tradition existed.

There is a convincing correlation between the distribution of post-conquest organised cremation cemeteries and the late Iron Age cremation areas which might have received further stimulus after the conquest. How far elements of native inspiration may have been subjected to a form of central regulation during the Roman period is uncertain. At a basic level, it has been observed that the Romano-British cremation cemeteries were provided with *ustrina* (above). Uncertainty rests over the technique employed in those areas of South-East England where cremation was practised before the Roman conquest. The absence of evidence for cremations *in situ* in the late Iron Age may indicate that forms of timber-built pyres were in use (22). What is certain is that *ustrina* made from durable material to be used repeatedly were a Roman introduction, their presence pointing to a degree of

internal regulation, at least in relation to the modality of the material process of cremation.

In contrast with the situation for the cemeteries in the South-East which retained a high degree and homogeneous character of internal organisation directly derived from the Pre-Roman cremation tradition, elsewhere the internal character of the cemeteries seem to have varied from site to site, the military sites in particular (York, Little Chester and Chester) displaying evidence for more Romanised forms (e.g. mausolea, inscribed stones). In central-southern England a tradition of formal cemeteries was probably uncommon. Therefore the cemeteries may have represented an external introduction being thus subjected to a more or less strong Roman influence according to the role played by the settlement the cemeteries were associated with, in the context of the network of Roman towns. This may partially account for the higher degree of internal variability in terms of cemetery organisation.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER II

(1) On the technical aspects concerning the process of cremation see McKinley 1989.

(2) *In situ* cremation does not appear to have characterised the mainstream of native Romano-British practice (Black 1986, 210-11). The absence of an Iron Age predecessor indicates a Continental origin of the rite, especially in the context of the northern military sites with which it was frequently associated (Philpott 1991, 48-49). As *busta* appear to be relatively rare in Roman Britain, it is reasonable to assume that, in the majority of the cases, the bodies were cremated away from the place of burial. So far, conclusive evidence for *ustrina* has emerged from only a handful of cremation cemeteries. This may imply that the pyres, whether built in perishable or durable material, have disappeared. For instance, recent excavations conducted at Westhampnett, near Chichester, have revealed the existence of one of the largest Late Iron Age cremation cemeteries in Western Europe. The site displayed evidence for pyres, small rectangular cross-plan slots which could have been dug to provide up-draughts for the cremation pyres, and shallow scoops. These latter contained cremated bones, burnt wood and fired clay, and may have represented the bases of pyres or votive deposits (Fitzpatrick 1994, 112; *Idem* 1997, *passim*).

(3) Black has discussed the evidence from a few cremation cemeteries in order to uncover patterns of orientation, in the attempt to establish a correlation between the frequently observed N-S alignment of the *ustrina* and the orientation of the cremated remains (from the position of the footwear). As Black himself recognises, at present there is no clear evidence that a particular orientation was favoured in cremation burials. Nonetheless the consistency of certain patterns [namely the movement away from N-S oriented burials (which had been dominant during the Iron Age) towards S-N oriented ones] could indicate a choice dictated by ritual priorities (Black 1986, 215-220).

(4) Uncertainty rests over the legal aspects concerning the management of the cremation cemeteries in Roman Britain.

(5) See note 3.

(6) The evidence for walled cemeteries in Roman Britain has been discussed by Jessup (1958) and, more recently, reviewed by Black (1986). For the hypothesis of a Gallic origin of the cemetery at the Derby Race Course to be related to the presence of *Cohortes* and *alae Gallorum* at Little Chester during the II century, see Todd (*pers. comm.* in Wheeler 1985, 251).

(7) Whether small mounds of soil were left over the burials to mark their position is uncertain. The provision of elaborate mounds must have been however rare, at least in the context of crowded cemeteries.

(8) See note 6.

(9) This trend seems to be suggested by the discovery of a few elaborated mausolea around Verulamium, in 1936-37 at Rothamstead, and more recently at Wood Lane End, Hemel Hemstead (Niblett 1994, 83). On burial in rural context see below, Ch. IV.

(10) See the well-known series of tombs at Pompeii and at Rome along the *Via Appia* (Mansuelli 1981).

(11) Frequently mausolea or other forms of elaborated tombstones were placed within walled enclosures. This was the usual pattern of the Italian walled cemeteries (see, for example, the necropolis at Aquileia in Northern Italy) (Mansuelli 1981).

(12) At Kelvedon nine datable vaults spreading throughout the period between the late III to the second half of the IV century were recorded. One was further marked by a circular timber mausoleum. The vaults were located in a restricted area of the cemetery in a focal position (Rodwell 1988, 48). Their presence may indicate the continuation of the trend of marking graves of special significance which has been recorded in the cremation cemeteries during the Late Pre-Roman Iron Age and following Roman period.

(13) Forms of mixed ritual in the literal sense of the word have been sometimes observed. Evidence has emerged for cinerary urns being buried over inhumations and *vice versa*, together with mixed burials of partially cremated partially inhumed bodies (Derby Race Course, Wheeler *et al.* 1985, 252). Moreover, it was observed that there was no apparent difference between the cinerary urns and the vessels used as grave goods with the inhumations (Trentholme Drive, Wenham 1968, 27). This may suggest that, in some instances, the change in burial practice may have been just 'superficial' without involving a change in funerary beliefs and attitudes towards death.

(14) The situation displayed by the cemetery at Oakley Cottage is not isolated. At York, the excavators of the Railway Station cemetery observed that, although most of the area produced both cremations and inhumations, small areas with concentrations of sole cremations and inhumations were observed, the cremations being placed on a straight line along a possible original boundary (Jones 1984, 35, 38).



(15) This observation may be taken as a further evidence that the creation of a cemetery in a formerly occupied area does not necessarily imply contraction, but simply indicate a change in the use of a portion of the suburbs.

(16) A similar phenomenon is well-attested in southern Gaul where the *colonia* at Orange had the wall circuit erected at a considerable distance from the core of the towns, in view of a possible expansion of the settlement *intra-moenia* (Mansuelli 1988).

(17) A brief summary of the chronological evidence for the cemetery at St Pancras (Chichester) may be useful. The presence of Flavian Samian suggests that the cemetery may have started around 70-80 AD. This chronology is supported by the evidence from the town and associated construction of Stane Street which occurred slightly before the creation of the burial ground. No such firm chronology could be produced for the terminal date of the cemetery. The Samian ware did not go beyond the Antonine period and little is known of the colour-coated wares to provide a precise chronology for the coarse ware. Few sporadic inhumations were recorded and generically dated to the III century. According to the excavators, their scarcity would indicate that the cemetery was not in general use (although, it may be added, not necessarily derelict) by the late III century, i.e. by the time inhumation had started to supersede cremation as a custom. By this time other cemeteries must have existed and one was certainly located outside the south gate where in 1819 the remains of few scattered burials were discovered during the excavation of the Canal Basin (Down & Rule 1971, 69-70, 72).

Further evidence may be provided by the chronology of the Bath Gate cemetery at Cirencester. There, the build up of mixed burial earth over a long period of time is due to the graves being cut through and then back-filled with dark soil of a rubbish dump (probably removed from the Roman town). This did not permit the definition of absolute chronology for the cemetery with early or late issues in specific areas; thus, a relative chronology was established on the basis of cutting and sealing of graves and on the evidence of the coins from the grave shaft. In fact, only four coins were found in association with burials as grave goods: in two cases, one (unreadable) coin was placed on the mouth whereas in the third burial two coins (Helena AD. 337-345 and Constans 345-348) were on each eye; a further coin was discovered beneath one of the skeletons, an issue of Honorius (400 AD.), which constitutes the latest date from the site. From the available archaeological evidence, it seems that burials took place simultaneously in the cemetery. The chronology of the coins in addition to the presence of burials post dating the cobbled layers of a Roman building (workshop (?) dismantled, from coin evidence, sometime before 300 AD.) suggests that the cemetery was surely in use as extensive burial areas from the end of the III century. However, the presence of coins 200-260 AD. and earlier issues, in addition to the evidence from the grave goods, suggests that the cemetery might have begun its life prior to the IV century suggesting a long period of use (Farwell & Molleson 1993).

(18) For the most comprehensive study of Iron Age burial practice in Britain see Whimster 1981.

(19) The use of rubbish pits, the general absence of furnishing and the practice of allowing burial within the settlements may indicate lack of concern for 'conventional funerary rules' (Whimster 1981, 190 ff.). However, postural and orientation preferences show that the inhumations did not represent the casual burials of social outcasts and that these forms of burials could have had a ritual and sacrificial meaning. Additionally, the emergence of inhumation with postural rules over most of England (crouched position with head to the north) may suggest the existence of an earlier tradition of surface burial which has left no visible mark but could have exerted influence over the layout of the later inhumations in formal cemeteries. The extensive practice of exposure or excarnation observed in the minority of surviving cases may suggest that exposure at a distance from the settlements without any re-arrangement of the remains was widespread (Wait 1985, 120-121).

Brucks (1995) provides an interesting analysis of the practice of excarnation in the Late Bronze Age when the disappearance of many archaeologically visible burial rites seems to indicate a changed role of the dead in concomitance with changes in the basis of political power. Greater emphasis was placed on control over land due to increased pressure and due to the need to define ownership. The control of both agricultural production and fertility became the primary means of gaining and maintaining political dominance through the monopolisation of the funerary rituals. The dead was seen as a metaphor, i.e. a symbol of transition and fertility, as well as a symbol of the ancestor.

(20) Millett has identified a subtype of cremation tradition in East Hampshire less rich than the counterparts in Essex and Hertfordshire mainly attested in rural context (Millett 1987).

(21) At Westhampnett, near Chichester, unenclosed cremations (which may have been wrapped in cloth or placed in leather containers) displayed rich furnishings as in the tradition of the 'Aylesford' burials in the South-East. Furthermore, the site incorporated a range of distinctive features representing different aspects of funerary and ritual practices. These activities were undertaken within discrete areas the allocation of which seems to have been subjected to some form of control. For instance, the graves were set around a circular or semicircular space at the west side of the site. Similarly, the pyres were located around the eastern perimeter of the burial area and ritual enclosures lay further to the east (Fitzpatrick 1994, *passim*; H. 1997, *passim*).

(22) It is probable that pyres made from perishable material were employed, as suggested by the discovery at Sandown, Isle of Wight, of a timber-built pyre in association with a cremation burial (Whimster 1981, 153 ff.). See also note 2.

# CHAPTER III

## THE ROMANO BRITISH INHUMATION CEMETERIES

### III.1 INTRODUCTION

During the II century inhumation gradually replaced cremation as the favoured burial rite in Rome and its provinces. Within the Empire, the change was gradual and regionally varied (Jones 1981, 18). Evidence from the few Romano-British cemeteries with mixed rites (1) would indicate that the modality of change in burial practice on the island conformed to the general pattern recorded elsewhere in the Western Empire: the two practices, cremation and inhumation, coexisted within the same cemetery for some time, with inhumation becoming progressively dominant. In Britain, as on the Continent, the increasing popularity of inhumation did not cause the total disappearance of cremation which was still practised, albeit spasmodically, during the IV century (2). The fact that both rites sometimes coexisted chronologically and spatially may indicate that the change in custom did not imply any significant change in doctrine (Toynbee 1971, 40). This observation is further corroborated by the rare occurrence of segregation by ritual preference (See Ch. II).

The diffusion of Christianity as a causal factor behind the change in burial practice has long been discredited (Nock 1932). The archaeological evidence shows that, from a chronological point of view, change in burial fashion was underway long before the appearance of any indication for widespread Christianity and that the earliest known examples of inhumations in Rome were not related to Christians. Similarly, the current belief that inhumation could facilitate the transition to the after-life does not appear to have stemmed from the teaching of any traditional pagan cult (Green 1977, 48). Evidence from the Continent would suggest that the popularity of inhumation spread from the top down (Jones 1981, Parker Pearson 1993): in other words, inhumation represented the means of burial of the elite, at least in the early phase. As a custom, it may have been reinforced by the Christian creed which promised a Day of Resurrection. Literally, this promoted a reluctance to destroy the body by cremation, although Christians did not object to cremation simply because of beliefs in a material resurrection of the flesh: inhumation was probably adopted by Christianity as a customary rite following the Jewish tradition of the burial of

Christ, as it had been handed down by the Gospels (Nock 1932) (3). In synthesis, to quote Thomas (1981, 228), if the idea that '*mortui resurgent incorrupti*' (Jerolamus, *Vulgata*, I *Ad Corinthios*, XV) taken in the most literal of sense was not the main reason why inhumation replaced cremation as the common burial rite in the Roman Empire, it was among the reasons why inhumation remained the customary practice, especially among the Christian communities.

Other explanatory theories have been tentatively put forward, from the religious, such as the growing popularity of the Eastern and Egyptian cults, to the materialistic and practical, such as the high cost of fuel (namely wood and charcoal) for the process of cremation (4). With particular reference to Britain, none of the proposed suggestions seems to account for the phenomenon nor to justify its diffusion, the search for possible causes having too often resulted in a tendency towards the explanation of a practice that was already established.

Chance discovery and extensive excavations conducted in the last few decades have failed to provide new answers. On the other hand, the increasing amount of available evidence from the inhumation cemeteries has made many archaeologists aware of the importance of spatial analysis in funerary archaeology and has given rise to a great upsurge of interest towards the appearance of recurrent patterns in the internal arrangement of the cemeteries. Discussions have taken place on the significance of the orientation of the graves, the location of the burials in plots, rows or lines, and the presence of focal graves and monuments (below), in order to uncover the potential religious and social meaning embedded in the archaeological record and define regional patterns.

The absence of defined grave-cuts and the heavy disturbance of some burial grounds as at Bath Gate (Cirencester), for example, together with the generalised scarcity of furnished graves from the late cemeteries, makes detailed spatial analysis extremely difficult. Apart from Lankhills (Winchester), the attempt to gather information by examining chronological sequences of development within the cemeteries and comparing similarities and differences over time has produced modest results. Internal spatial analysis has thus been limited to the investigation of individual isolated graves or groups of them and their distribution.

Furthermore, there has been a failure, with a few exceptions, to make spatial analysis an integral part of more general discussions on burial matters. The explanation of phenomena such as the layout of the new extended cemeteries during the IV century has been reduced to vague assumptions that some form of management, whether public or private, religious or secular may have existed.

The analysis of those aspects which may be considered indicative of cemetery management has been attempted in this chapter by collecting information from a few selected burial sites in order to identify similarities and variations through time.

## III.2 LOCATION AND PLANNING

### III.2.i THE CEMETERY SITES

(Table II)

As in the previous chapter, the criteria under which the sites analysed in the course of the present chapter have been selected are based the following factors:

- Chronology of the cemeteries (late III- IV century).
- Method of excavation conducted in the burial areas (extensive investigation).
- Date of excavation (from the 60's onwards).
- Number of burials in relation to the status of the parent settlement (e.g. major and minor towns)
- Availability of information in terms of both final excavation and bone reports.
- Geographical distribution of the sites in a relatively broad area in south-east Britain

As a result of the application of the criteria (above), the choice has fallen on the following sites:

- major towns: Bath Gate (Cirencester), Butt Road (Colchester), Poundbury Camp and Crown Building (Dorchester), Gambier Parry Lodge and 76, Kingsholm Road (Gloucester), Verulam Hills Field (Verulamium-St. Albans), Lankhills and Victoria Road (Winchester)
- minor towns: Ashton, Ancaster, Camington, Dunstable, Queensford Farm (Dorchester on Thames), Southern Cemetery <sup>1</sup> and Northover (Ilchester).

A summary of these sites is provided below.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Southern cemetery at Ilchester includes the sites at Little Spittle, Townsend Close and Heavy Acre.

## MAJOR TOWNS

Cirencester, Bath Gate (McWhirr *et al.* 1982)

(Plates XXXIV-XXXIX)

### Location

Excavations conducted during the 60's and 70's in advance of a large scale urban development to the south-west of modern Cirencester have offered the opportunity to investigate a tract of ground between the walls of *Corinium Dobunnorum* and the amphitheatre along the Fosse Way, immediately outside the Bath Gate. The area yielded interesting sequences of land use, the earliest of which was related to quarrying activity (later II-early III century). After stone extraction had ceased, around the middle to the later III century the disused quarry pits were employed for the dumping of rubbish probably removed from the town.

Also examined was a building to the north of the Fosse Way the main room of which contained a stone-built smithing hearth. From coin evidence it was dismantled sometime before 300 AD and was then sealed by a cobbled surface. The site was finally given over for burial. 435 graves were sampled. They were found to be cut through and then back-filled with the dark soil of the rubbish dump. As a consequence of this, based on vertical stratigraphy and numismatic evidence provided by coins in the grave-fills, only a relative chronology could be established for the cemetery.

### Internal features

At Cirencester the majority of the burials followed a north-south alignment with the heads to the north; a high proportion of west-east oriented graves also occurred. Two main features seem to have guided the organisation of the cemetery, the Fosse Way along the sides of which graves were predominantly west-east oriented, and a 'V' profiled ditch (running south from the Fosse way to the quarry to the west of the cemetery area) that had conditioned the north-south orientation of the burials. The differing alignments caused overlapping of graves. This was interpreted as evidence for the use of the area over a long period of time. A series of rows of north-south oriented burials were observed running parallel to the ditch, with some burials overlapping the guide-lines in irregularly spaced rows. With regards to the ditch, there was no archaeological evidence that it acted as a cemetery boundary: some burials were recovered from its upper layers and were cut into its bank. It was suggested that the it may have served as a drainage ditch for the quarry which was in use by the late II century to the middle of the III

century. Evidence emerged for wooden and stone coffins together with stone and tile packing. Furnishing was limited to a few graves and mixed up with the rubbish dumped from the town.

The condition of the cemetery hampered the definition of social or family grouping. However, three groups of multiple male burials were located to the south of the Fosse Way. In particular a group contained bodies with a variety of fractures and anomalies; due to the burials being located in the proximity of the amphitheatre (still in use during the IV century), it was suggested that they may have belonged to individuals who participated in combats.

### Colchester, Butt Road (Crummy *et al.* 1993)

(Plates XL and XLI)

#### Location

Butt Road is located opposite the south-west corner of the walled area of the Roman town, some 250 m from the main gate. There, the layout of the Roman road becomes uncertain.

The site was first discovered during extensive sand quarrying around the middle of the 19th century when over 200 burials and an apsidal building (interpreted as a cemetery-church) on the north-west edge of the site were recorded (Hull 1958, 256-7). In more recent times excavations were conducted between the 70's and the mid 80's in advance of the construction of the southern section of the inner relief road which was scheduled to be built 150 m to the south of the walled town. The earliest activity on site was Roman in date. Two main periods of use of the site in Roman times were identified, period I and period II with period I being further subdivided into three phases.

#### • Period I

- Phase 1 (I-III century): The earliest activity on site emerged in the form of sand and gravel extraction for use in construction work.
- Phase 2 (III century-AD 300): During the III century the area appears to have been organised into loosely defined ditched plots for agricultural-horticultural purposes. Iron working debris found to the east of the site and pottery sherds scattered to the north and west may indicate the presence of industries nearby. Cremation and inhumation burials were found in association with the agricultural plots, being placed near or within the boundary ditches.
- Phase 3 (AD 300-320/40). During the last phase of period I most of the site was set aside for a more formerly established cemetery. This contained north-south oriented inhumations. A small bone-working industry seems to have occupied one



of the earlier plots. In some instances the boundaries of the earlier plots were partially re-defined, with the southern limit of the cemetery being marked by a boundary ditch.

- Period II

(320/40-400): In Period II the formal cemetery continued to be in use for east-west oriented burials (of which 620 were fully investigated). By AD 350 the cemetery had expanded beyond the limits of the earlier burial ground.

The fairly sudden change of alignment appears to mark the adoption of a Christian burial rite in concomitance with the construction of a cemetery church on the north-west edge of the cemetery (AD 320/40-400+). On the basis of the chronology of the church, the cemetery may have been in use well into the V century, although there was no conclusive evidence for very late IV-early V century burials.

### Internal features

- Period I

- Phase 2: Within a strip of land 5 m wide in the eastern portion of the site a sample of 20 burials were excavated. The burials (probably contemporary with each other) consisted of 15 uncoffined inhumations for children and adults of both sexes on a variety of north-south alignments and 5 urned cremations for infants. They were organised in lines and clusters which suggested the presence of family groups in association with the agricultural ditched plots. Whether each individual plot may have belonged to a different owner or the plots were part of one or more larger properties is uncertain. Grave furnishing was scarce and mainly associated with the children.

- Phase 3: Further 44 graves were recorded in the eastern portion of the site. There were only three instances of direct stratigraphic relationship with the earlier burials.

On the basis of the evidence from the coins (employed as grave-goods or found in the back-fill of the grave-pits) the burials appear to have been laid out between AD 300-320/40. Their relatively low number and the consistency in ritual characteristics may indicate that the cemetery operated for a short period of time. The burials consisted of north-south oriented inhumations in wooden coffins, a high proportion of which were accompanied by grave goods. They had been laid out with great care and were well spaced, despite the apparent absence of surface markers.

On the basis of variations within the predominant alignment and the composition of the grave goods, five groups were identified and interpreted as representing possible burials in family plots.

## • Period II

In the course of the IV century the cemetery expanded westwards, although respecting the earlier boundaries. Due to the lack of dating evidence it was not possible to establish sequences of use and phases of development on the site.

In the eastern area few burials from the previous period escaped damage during Period II. Nonetheless, two former groups seem to have continued into the IV century. One of the two groups was located close to the east end of the church where the later west-east oriented burials were laid out with extreme care to avoid disturbing the earlier interments. The other group extended by the acquisition of a vacant plot adjacent to it. Whether the entire cemetery was divided into family plots is uncertain.

Overlapping of graves was also observed among Period II inhumations and attributed to the high density of burials. These consisted of 448 adults and 175 children.

The inhumations were west-east oriented. Whether due to the longer period of use or the presence of the church, or the topographic character of the ground markedly sloping down southwards, in the northern portion of the cemetery the graves were less well ordered than in the southern area where burials were coherently laid out in long rows. More generally, variations in the alignment within the range of west-east burials was observed, which may indicate that the earlier graves were obliterated and did not exert influence on the orientation of the later interments.

The graves were unfurnished but in 47 instances, the goods consisting of unworn personal ornaments mainly associated with children and vessels mainly associated with adults. Overall, the majority of furnished graves belonged to children. Only five burials were uncoffined (one of which, for a prone body with bound wrist and ankles, was located outside the cemetery boundaries). The bodies were placed within a wide range of containers (timber, timber with inner lead coffin in two instances, hollowed-out logs, tile coffins for children) and displayed evidence for a variety of treatments (plastering, tile-packing of coffined and uncoffined inhumations, corpse and grave good wrapping by means of textile). Additionally, contemporary double and stacked burials and (contemporary and non-contemporary) multiple interments were recorded. Evidence emerged for six timber vaults, fairly short lived structures dated around the middle of the IV century, for double and single burials. Two vaults were set on a similar alignment, two were located on the eastern edge of the site along the surviving boundary of an earlier plot. In a few instances the vaults appear to have acted as focal points for later graves to cluster around them. Near the south boundary, and aligned with it, debris of tiles and un-mortared stones pointed to the presence of a

rectangular structure of uncertain interpretation (a mausoleum?). There was no direct stratigraphic relationship between the building and the burials close by. Surface markers were observed in the form of timber posts and fragments of tiles and stones which appear to have prevented later damage. Finally, evidence emerged for large empty pits being dug and then back-filled possibly to ensure continuity of burial for members of the same family.

Beside the presence of the possible mausoleum and the six timber vaults, the existence of family correlation was tentatively suggested by similarities of alignment together with shared burial characteristics (namely composition of the grave-goods, type of body container and surface markers) and further corroborated by the analysis of non-metrical traits conducted on the skeletal material.

To the north-west of the cemetery was an apsidal stone construction with plastered walls and earth floor which, on numismatic evidence, seems to have been in use from *ca.* AD 320-340 well into the advanced V century. Inside the building a north-south oriented timber-lined grave was placed between two posts. The plan, orientation, period of use and associated grave-like features are consistent with a martyrium the focus of which may have been the grave complex at its eastern end.

Despite the long period of use of the church, there was no evidence for very late IV-early V century burials. However, those may have existed beyond the limits of the excavation area where evidence emerged for property boundaries (Crummy 1980, *passim*).

## Dorchester

- i. Poundbury (Farwell & Molleson 1993) (Plates XXXI and XLII)

### Location

Poundbury Camp is located less than half a km to the north-west of *Durnovaria*, between the Roman Poundbury Road to the south and the River Frome to the north. Excavations were conducted between 1966 and 1987 following chance discoveries. The site produced evidence for occupation dating from prehistoric times.

- Neo/BA: Evidence emerged for a settlement and a cemetery (consisting of 3 round barrows) on top of the hill. In the same location, a large ditched enclosure dating to the late BA was interpreted as representing the beginning of a hill-fort settlement.

- IA: The hill-fort appears to have been occupied throughout the IA. At the same time, an enclosed (and later open) settlement was founded on the hillside. In the late IA a cemetery for crouched inhumation burials came into existence.
- Early Roman: During the early phase of Roman occupation both the main LIA settlement and the hill-fort were abandoned although the cemetery may have continued to be in use at least until the early II century. An aqueduct was built to the south along the road approaching the town to the north-west. Timber and dry-stone buildings associated with rural activity represented the early Roman settlement phase.
- Late II-early IV century: The Roman settlement continued to grow on the hillside (on the same site as the IA settlement). A series of enclosures were probably part of a farm-complex. Within one of the enclosures inhumations were laid out along the north (northern peripheral cemetery) and east (eastern peripheral cemetery) boundaries. At the same time, a temple (or shrine) appears to have been built on top of the hill (on the same site as the former hill-fort settlement).
- IV century: During the late Roman period the farm went out of use being progressively overcome by the growth of a major burial ground (main cemetery) which expanded across the settlement site and served as one of the main extra-mural cemeteries of Durnovaria from the first quarter to the end of the IV century. Around the margins of the cemetery area traces of timber buildings and occupation levels suggest that some domestic activity may have continued.
- V century: In the Post-Roman period burial activity continued but on a much more reduced scale. The main cemetery went out of use, its central area having been taken up with an extensive settlement of rectangular timber buildings, pit-groups and grain dryers. The walls of the earlier mausolea, when standing, were incorporated within the settlement. Finds suggest that the hill-fort may have been re-occupied at this stage.
- VI-VII century: The VI-VII century witnessed a second major phase of the settlement site (by then enclosed by a boundary ditch). The hill-fort, on the other hand, appears to have been only partially occupied.
- Late Saxon-Medieval: The site was reverted to agricultural use following a period of dereliction.

### Internal features

#### • Durotrigian Cemetery

67 crouched inhumation burials were uncovered in the Pre-Roman cemetery. These were concentrated in three major groups: to the south-east of the open settlement there were 22 neonates (and young children) (Site E) with a second

group of male and female adults being located further to the east (Sites E and F); the third group was represented by an equal number of adults and infants buried along the earlier settlement enclosure ditch (site C).

Due to the complex stratigraphy, it was not possible to assign any particular groups of graves to the late phase of the IA settlement or to the early phase of Roman occupation. Furthermore the infant burials in site E had been disturbed by later inhumations (below).

#### • Roman Cemetery

The Northern and Eastern Peripheral Cemeteries appear to have been in use throughout the III century up to the middle of the IV century.

Northern Peripheral Cemetery: The Northern Peripheral Cemetery contained 35 inhumations in widely spaced oversize graves. The burials were both west-east and north-south oriented, i.e. on the same alignment as the enclosure ditches, with the position of the heads matching all the four points of the compass.

Most of the burials were placed in wooden coffins and were accompanied by grave-goods (among which there were hobnails).

Eastern Peripheral Cemetery: 89 inhumations and 3 cremations were uncovered in the Eastern Peripheral Cemetery. The former were confined and placed in smaller grave-cuts in tight clusters, predominantly on a north-south alignment according to the orientation of the enclosing boundary ditch. The heads were either to the north or the south. Some burials were also placed within and some were aligned upon one of the disused farm buildings, many post-dating earlier pits and ovens. By comparison with the situation for the northern peripheral cemetery, the grave-goods in the eastern cemetery were rarer.

Main Cemetery: Two of the enclosures originally associated with the farm-complex were used for the earliest burials in the Main Cemetery. The latter appears to have expanded from east to west, i.e. away from the area of the LIA-early Roman settlement. More than 1200 inhumations (including 190 infants) were uncovered. They had been carefully laid out in orderly rows on a west-east alignment with the heads to the west, matching not the co-ordinate points, but the former ditched enclosures. The burials were placed in a variety of containers ranging from simple wooden coffins to wooden coffins with lead-lining and stone coffins, the latter been located inside and between mausolea. Seven rectangular mausolea were recorded. They had foundations of stone blocks, mortar and flint nodules supporting roofs of limestone and tiles; two were internally decorated with figurative painted wall plaster. Inside, they contained two or more burials laid out in rows. Four mausolea showed sequential burials of possible high ranking individuals: both male and female adults occurred in almost equal proportion whereas few children were represented. Finally, a grave located

between two masonry mausolea was covered with a wooden structure. It contained the burial of a male adult placed between two infants, the man's hands resting on the infants' heads (Green 1982, 66-67). In some cases a family correlation between the burials in the mausolea was confirmed by means of skeletal analysis. Additionally, groups of graves were often clustered together according to furnishing, body treatment (e.g. plastering), metrical and non-metrical traits, the presence of individuals of all ages and both sexes pointing to possible family plots. The tendency towards clustering was particularly marked in the earlier part of the cemetery.

During the IV century a further former enclosure was added as part of the expanding cemetery. This was only partially excavated. It contained extended inhumations and 3 rectangular ditched funerary enclosures (bedding trenches?) around single centrally placed inhumations (for male adults). Additional clusters of late extended inhumations were found to the west and east (Site C) of the main cemetery. These displayed the same features as the burials in the Main Cemetery but for instances of stone and tile packing in Site C. In general, no grave goods were found in association with the burials in the Main Cemetery and Site C. Notwithstanding the presence of one decapitated burial, the absence of grave-goods together with the presence of an inscription on the lead lining of a coffin and a metal object in the shape of a 'Y' from the grave for a female adult may indicate the presence of Christian burials (Watts 1991, 52-53 ff.).

Further burials of uncertain chronology were found uncoffined in shallow grave-pits. Some appeared to be post-Roman although a few may have represented the latest phase of Roman burial.

- ii. Crown Building (Green *et al.* 1981) (Plate XXXI)

#### Location

During 1971 excavations were conducted at the Crown Building, a Roman cemetery-site which is situated some 200 m away from the western walls of *Durnovaria*, at the junction of the two Roman roads leading respectively to Ilchester and Exeter. The area appears to have been contained within two north-south aligned boundary ditches. The boundaries may have been contemporary with the cemetery. This was suggested by the evidence for debris from a possible enclosing wall associated with the ditches and by the accurate west-east orientation of the burials in relation to the boundaries. The extension of the cemetery to the north and south remains unknown.

### Internal features

Numerous (?) unfurnished burials on a west-east alignment had been laid out with great care in lines and rows. There was no evidence for the presence of markers above ground. However, some forms of markers from perishable material (e.g. posts) may have been employed. Adults and children appear to have been present, at least on the basis of the size of the burial pits. The bodies were laid in wooden coffins. Evidence also emerged for more substantial containers with elaborate brackets. In particular, the plaster body of a young adult male was found placed in a lead coffin and accompanied by a head and plait of preserved hair. It lay parallel and close to a further wooden coffin with lead lining. The excavator suggested that the two coffins may have acted as foci of special significance within the cemetery.

No dating evidence was available for a firm chronology of the cemetery to be established. However, given the strong similarities between the burials at the Crown Building and those at Poundbury (Main Cemetery), the date would point to the first half of the IV century. Despite the absence of direct internal indicators, such as inscriptions or symbols as at Poundbury, the excavator suggested that the Crown Building site may have been employed for the burial of Christians.

## Gloucester

- i. 76, Kingsholm Road (Atkin 1987; *Id.* 1988) (Plates XLIII-XLVI)

### Location

Most of the development in the area outside the southern defences of the Roman Claudio-Neronian fortress took place in the form of 19th century terraced housing. In 1978, following a small scale development program and watching briefs, structures on the same alignment as the buildings inside the fortress and late Roman burials were observed. Ten years later a major excavation was carried out at the Richard Cound BMW showroom which offered the opportunity to investigate a portion of an extensive inhumation cemeteries dated to the III-IV century.

The site is situated between the early fortress to the north-west and the Flavian *colonia* of *Glevum* to the south, along the Roman Kingsholm Road.

A complex timber-building (building 264) was uncovered. It was located along the road frontage. Parallel to it, a further building lay 60 m away to the east, along a north-south ditch (associated with a now lost Roman road?). To the north, a

row of units at right angles with the road frontage was already known to exist, following the excavation in 1978.

The interpretation of the buildings is uncertain. They may have represented an extension of the fortress to the south of the defences (given the same technique of construction as the military buildings inside the fort) or, as it is more probable, part of an extra-mural civilian settlement which had developed along the access roads to the fort.

Behind building 264 a series of pits for gravel extraction were later converted to rubbish pits. These contained early I century pottery (both imported and Romano-British), being probably related to the presence of a kiln to the south of the excavated area.

In AD 67 the army is thought to have moved to *Glevum* (which became a *colonia* in AD 96-98). Although building 264 was probably demolished at this stage with the land reverting to agricultural use, the row of units to the north continued to be occupied during the I-II century showing that civilian occupation did not cease immediately. To the north of the excavated area organic soil containing domestic refuse, fragments of broken military equipment and sherds of pottery (AD 80-100) was dumped on the site and later sealed by a spread of gravel to patch the yard associated with the still functioning buildings to the north. To the south the area was occupied by a system of ditches defining enclosures (for pasturing live stock?).

In the course of the III and IV century the last occupation phase of the site took place in the form of an extensive inhumation cemetery.

During the Middle Ages the site formed the rear of medieval properties (XII-XIII century). After a period of abandonment the site was reverted to agricultural use up to the 19th century.

### Internal Features

58 graves in all were recorded. These had been cut through the layers of gravel and soil accumulations (above). The burials were supine and extended. Five alignments ranging from north-south to west-east were observed and interpreted as representing chronological phases of burial, with a clear change in the layout of the cemetery during the IV century. Based on stratigraphic evidence, the earliest burials (III-IV century) displayed a random layout predominately on a north-south alignment. However, the later burials (IV century) were arranged in more regular lines and rows and lay west-east, possibly on the same alignment as the former field boundaries. Although there was no general pattern of growth, the presence of the most southerly burial some 25 m to the south may suggest that the Kingsholm cemetery as a whole originally developed around the margins of the



*pomerium* which covered the site of the Claudio-Neronian fort during the I century. As the settled area contracted, the cemetery extended further south towards Gloucester to serve the needs of the *colonia*, the burials at the BMW site being towards the end of the sequence.

Notwithstanding the fact that burial took place over a fairly long period of time, there was no intercutting of graves, suggesting that markers may have been employed. Some of the later burials displayed evidence for a slot at the rear of the grave.

A number of graves were tightly packed in what have been interpreted as possible family plots. Additionally, two stacked burials were observed, possibly representing husband and wife. The bodies were mainly coffined although the incidence of coffins seems to have increased notably into the later series of graves. In four cases the bodies had been packed with stones. In one instance a coffin was found raised off the floor of the grave-pit onto stone pads.

Sherds of pottery within the grave fills ranged from the I century onwards with the coins mainly dating to the IV century. The grave goods were sparse, their widest range being associated with the later burials. Worn and possibly unworn personal ornaments (when not residual or intrusive), a bone comb and hobnails represented the most common categories of furnishing.

- ii. Gambier Parry Lodge (Coppice Corner) (Garrod 1984, 49-51; Garrod *et al.* 1984, 68, 9/83) (Plates XLIII and XLIV)

### Location

Rescue excavations were conducted between 1983-84 following chance discovery and in advance of building development. The site is located some 50 m to the north of the north defence ditch of the Claudio-Neronian fort, not far away from Kingsholm Road. It produced very little evidence for prehistoric activity, the first secure evidence for occupation dating to the early Roman period. The excavators uncovered the remains of a I century timber building with pebble floor and wall trenches set between two parallel ditches. The building may have been contemporary with or even earlier than the Claudio-Neronian fort (Hurst 1985, 118). The orientation of both the building and the ditches appears to have been conditioned by the line of 'Ermine Street'. Evidence emerged for gravel pits extending up to 100 m east of Tewkesbury Road frontage. These contained Claudio-Neronian occupation refuse (mainly pottery) and a Celtic copper alloy harness piece.

During the late I-early II century burials started and a cemetery was created which extended across part of the former gravel working area and was in use up

to the IV century. On the whole little evidence emerged for IV century activity other than that associated with the burials.

### Internal features

125 burials were excavated out of an estimated number of 2000. These dated from the late I-early II to the IV century and consisted of extended and supine inhumations on a north-south alignment, parallel to the line of 'Ermine Street'. Seven crouched inhumations and seven cremations, possibly representing the earliest burials on site, were also recorded. Most of the inhumations had been placed in wooden coffins and a few were accompanied by personal jewellery and pottery vessels. As a whole, grave-goods were rare indicating a date range of mid I to late III century. The latest deposited find was in the form of a coin of Constantius II (AD 337-346)

Stacked bodies were observed in a number of instances and were interpreted as representing burials in family plots. Only a handful of inhumations were in more scattered positions. A tombstone (II century) depicting a standing male figure dressed in civilian robes was a unique find. The inscription read DIS MANIBUS L VALERIUS AURELIUS VET LEG XX (Valeria Victrix) indicating that it belonged to a veteran soldier. No further evidence for burial markers emerged. Finally a track metalled with stones and pebbles was uncovered and tentatively dated to the II-IV century. It was located some 70 m to the south, on the same alignment as the burial ground.

St. Albans, Verulam Hills Field (Anthony 1968)

(Plates XLVII and XLVIII)

### Location

An extensive excavation was conducted in advance of the construction of an athletic stadium in the field south of the London Gate of *Verulamium* between the Roman Watling Street to the east and the river Ver to the west. This revealed the presence of a small inhumation cemetery.

Evidence of occupation emerged in the form of a late Belgic cremation cemetery (late I century BC-mid I century AD) bounded by two ditches which were later cut by eight scattered Roman inhumations dated to the mid-late I century AD. The foundation of a IV century apsidal building of flint had damaged some of the Belgic cremations (below). Evidence for industrial activity on site was revealed by the presence of pits and gullies. These features have been related to a II century pottery kiln located in the immediate proximity and interpreted as part of

a system of settling tanks for water to be used in the preparation of the clay. Other contemporary pottery kilns were scattered on the site. 6 Roman cremations were found between and in the fill of the pits, indicating that the area had partially, if not completely, ceased to be used for industrial purposes sometime during the advanced II century. The last occupation phase of the area witnessed the creation of a small inhumation cemetery on the lower slope of the field parallel to the modern Mud Lane which runs alongside the western bank of the river Ver. A tripartite flint funerary monument and a tile built tomb on the same alignment were built soon after the first graves were dug. Some 150 m to the north of the cemetery an apsidal building of uncertain interpretation is among the latest features on the site. It may have represented a Christian church (Watts 1991, 99 ff.), although the location at a considerable distance from the graves makes it difficult to uncover the precise relationship between the building and the cemetery.

#### Internal features

The cremations had been deposited in a variety of cinerary containers ranging from wooden boxes and caskets to ceramic cists and glass urns. About fifteen inhumation burials were recorded and dated by means of numismatic evidence to the end of the III-IV century. These were subdivided into three groups according to the orientation and the depth of the grave cuts. The excavator suggested that both orientation and depth of the grave cuts may be related to different chronological phases of burial. A north-east/south-west oriented tripartite flint tomb was recorded. It contained three graves, for one adult male and two adult females, one for each compartment. With regards to the typology of the monument, there is no evidence for a specific category (pagan versus Christian) the tomb may have belonged to (Anthony 1968, 40). It may have represented a family tomb since the male and one of the females appeared to be genetically related (Wells 1968, 40). A tile-built tomb parallel to the flint tomb was also found. This had been severely damaged.

At Verulam Hills Field some of the Belgic cremations on site were damaged by the construction of a flint founded building on the most prominent portion of the shoulder of land. The building was north-west/south-east oriented with an apse of irregular shape projecting from the north-west wall. The latter contained IV century pottery sealed in the masonry. In the proximity of the construction two fragments of a life-size statue were also uncovered. The plan, orientation and the presence of a cemetery to the south are consistent with the interpretation of the building as a cemetery church, although uncertainty rests on its relationship with the graves which were located some 700 m away.

## Winchester

- i. Lankhills (Clarke 1979) (Plates VI and XLIX)

### Location

Between the 60's and the early 70's excavations were conducted at Lankhills outside the North Gate of the Roman *Venta Belgarum* following the discovery of skeletal remains and IV century artefacts during modern building activity.

Previous chance discoveries immediately outside the North Gate revealed the presence of burials. These seem to have spread northwards, i.e. away from the town, along the east side of the Cirencester Road from the I century onwards, reaching Lankhills in the IV century. The chronological phases in the spatial development of the cemeteries were mirrored by the adoption of different burial rites, with cremation as the predominant funerary custom in the southern cemeteries during the first two centuries.

Within the excavated area at Lankhills, features predating the burials were recorded, in particular ditches 9, 12 and 43 (referred to in the text as F. 9, F. 12 and F. 43) which lay parallel to each other and ran north-south. F. 9 consisted of a series of irregular pits *ca.* 4 m wide which were later cut by F. 12 at three points. The intersections were not extensive suggesting that F. 12 respected F. 9 and that they were probably in use together sometime before the late III century. By AD 310, F. 9 was abandoned for it was cut by many graves, the earliest being no later than AD 310-330. As the pits were roughly in line and dug to be immediately back-filled with rich brown soils devoid of finds, F. 9 was interpreted as representing a series of bedding trenches for trees and shrubs. Unfortunately, there was no supporting botanical evidence. F. 12 was a ditch 2 m wide and 0.5 m deep. From numismatic evidence it appears to have been dug during the III century, and progressively filled up during the late III-IV century. By the second quarter of the IV century some infant graves were dug into the ditch and by AD 350 intensive burial began. The profile of the ditch with the east side in the form of a sharp drop and the west side forming a gentle slope suggests that this may have originally acted as a boundary, i.e. to prevent stock straying west of its line. Finally, F. 43 was a shallow depression with no clear limits at the east. It was cut by F. 12; as the cut was very extensive, it would appear that the two features were not contemporary. It was suggested that the boundary marked by F. 12 may have been long standing, having been previously marked by F. 43. The former was cut by many graves which predated burial further to the east.

### Internal features

The inhumation burials were coffined and accompanied by grave-goods. Tile and flint packing occurred in a few instances. A relationship between F. 12 and the graves was observed from the orientation of the burials: the burials were mainly west-east aligned with heads to west. Patterning of possible groups of graves with similar orientation were investigated by plotting the graves' alignment in 10-20 degree intervals. The presence of two main groups of graves resulted, one in the west sector of the cemetery at right angles to the Cirencester road, the other in the east part perpendicular to the major boundary ditch (F. 12) suggesting that the ditch continued to be of topographic relevance, at least for a certain period of time, influencing the arrangement of the cemetery.

At Lankhills a tendency for the alignments to follow pre-existing land-boundaries with north-south or east-west orientation matching the cardinal points has been observed. These boundaries seem to have been partially respected in the cemetery layout and then used as burial plots.

In spite of the absence of superimposition of graves and the even sex distribution, evidence for a possible family plot came from a cluster of seven burials (Feature (F. 6), some of which were surrounded by, some cut through, a gully (a bedding trench for a hedge ?). Here adults of both sexes and children were present. On the basis of the grave goods, it was suggested that the burials may have belonged to a wealthy or important family. Uncertainty rests upon the conclusions drawn on the possible Christian significance of this cluster of graves (Watts 1991, *passim*). In addition to F. 6, four rectangular gullies (also interpreted as bedding trenches for hedges) were recorded; two of them were in the eastern area of the cemetery (AD 390), the others to the west of F.12 (AD 330-370). All the gullies enclosed wealthy or unusual individual graves (including a cenotaph).

Mounds were observed at Lankhills. They were concentrated in F. 12. It was not possible to establish whether mounds were originally scattered throughout the cemetery or they survived in the ditch due to the particular conditions of the soil.

Two wooden chambers were found in association with richly furnished burials of an adult male and an adult female. Finally, seventeen step-graves (for adults of both sex and for three children) were identified on the basis of the size of the pit and the presence of steps cut in the graves to either sides of the main pit. They were concentrated in the area west of F. 12 (310-370/90). Their absence in the area to the east may show that the typology was not characteristic of the later IV century.

At Lankhills the proportion of furnished graves was very high with several categories of objects being represented. In the middle of the IV century a new burial rite appeared which was characterised by the deposition of worn personal

ornaments such as cross-bow broaches and belt suites. This new rite was related to the presence of foreign people from the Danube area (Clarke 1977). In particular, of the eighteen graves with worn personal ornaments, sixteen appeared to be "intrusive". They were mainly located among indigenous wealthy burials with objects from precious material the distribution of which was concentrated west of F.6 and more widespread in the western part of the cemetery. As a whole, wealthy burials tended to cluster together in privileged areas within the cemeteries.

In general, with the exception of hobnails and equipment, children and adults were accompanied by the same items of furnishing. With reference to the former, both worn and unworn personal ornaments occurred with girls, whereas boys were not provided with unworn ornaments.

• ii. Victoria Road (Clarke 1979; Kjolbye-Biddle 1995) (Plate VI)

Location

Excavations at Victoria Road were conducted in the early 70's in advance of redevelopment. The site is located outside the North Gate of *Venta Belgarum* beyond the west side of the Roman road to Cirencester, opposite Hyde Street where an early cremation cemetery has been recently uncovered (see Ch. II).

A sample of four cremations and 125 inhumations were recorded to the south of a small paleo-stream, the Fulload, beyond a blank strip of land which may have originally been occupied by a bank.

Internal features

The earliest inhumations on site dated to AD 350. The cemetery appears to have been short lived, coming to an end sometime during the late IV century.

In the western area a fairly homogeneous group of unfurnished and coffined burials on a west-east alignment was observed. Only the presence of some later uncoffined infant burials seems to have upset the general plan of neat rows of graves. An open space separated this group of graves from an area of rather denser burials, few of which were uncoffined, mainly unfurnished and laid out with care, which may have been contemporary with the group to the west. One of the graves contained a double interment (with an upper uncoffined and unfurnished burial laying above a coffined and furnished inhumation). A series of shallow unfurnished and uncoffined inhumations with peculiar body postures of a probable later date showed disregard for previous alignments although maintaining an approximate west-east orientation. They caused disturbance of earlier interments. Further graves, probably even later, were found evenly spaced

to form a row of shallow uncoffined but furnished inhumations. From the evidence, it would appear that as at Lankhills, burial organisation at Victoria Road came to an end during the later IV century.

In the eastern side of the site a group of coffined and furnished inhumations on a north-south alignment emerged. The graves inter-cut each other causing disturbance. The group of four cremations were located in the same area.

## MINOR TOWNS

### Ancaster

(Barley 1964, 9; Wilson & May 1965; Whitwell *et al.* 1966, 13; Wilson 1968; Wilson 1970; Barley *et al.* 1974, 16; Todd 1975, 221)

(Plate L)

#### Location

Roman burials were uncovered to the west of the Roman town along the outer side of the western defensive ditches, following gravel extraction in the modern cemetery which was opened at the beginning of this century. In recent years the discovery of new burials together with fragments of a life-size draped statue and inscribed stones (which had been employed as cover-slabs for stone-lined graves) have attracted attention. Systematic excavations of the site began in 1964 revealing that a late cemetery had developed in a formerly built-up area outside the defences of the Roman town where three phases of stone founded buildings were recorded. 300 inhumations were sampled. Fragments of building material and pottery associated with a disused well (through which a few graves were subsequently cut) indicated that the cemetery was laid down sometimes during the early IV century. The proposed chronology was further confirmed by the grave-goods which accompanied some of the burials.

A hearth and an area of paving seem to have post-dated the cemetery, although the former were not associated with any datable material (Wilson 1968, 198; 1970, 284).

#### Internal features

The cemetery displayed a fairly orderly layout. Excluding 12 infants, the graves were west-east oriented and carefully arranged in rows with occasional overlapping. Some of the burials were placed in local stone coffins but the majority were found in stone lined and wooden coffins. In some instances stones had been placed at the head and foot to mark the graves. Grave-goods were rare and mainly confined to personal ornaments. The organisation of the cemetery suggests a master plan for the graveyard although no surface markers for the graves or grave plots were recorded.



## Ashton

- i. Formal Cemetery (Hadman and Upex 1975, *Id.* 1977, *Id.* 1979; Hadman 1984)  
(Plates LI and LII)

### Location

A large scale excavation was conducted in advance of modern road works. Evidence of Roman occupation emerged in the form of ribbon development of buildings regularly arranged on either side of the Roman street line. Occupation seems to have started during the mid to the late II century AD. Some of the buildings may have represented workshops on the basis of the presence of hearths and hammer-scales (probably related to iron smithing activity). Further south the settlement developed towards the river Nene. Stone and timber buildings were recorded. They were fewer in this area of the town which probably represented the margins of the Roman zone of occupation. A number of enclosures was laid out in the area from AD 50/60 onwards. Their boundaries were initially defined by ditches later replaced by fences. By the late Roman period some of the surrounding land was given over to burial use. Here a series of graves were laid in a formal arrangement as part of a cemetery on the western side of the modern road to Ashton which departs from the A 605.

### Internal Features

To the south-west of the built-up area of the settlement the cemetery lay within a north-south oriented boundary ditch to the east and a possible hedge planted to the north. 188 graves were excavated. None was dug up on the opposite side of the road. Within the boundaries the graves had been laid out in orderly rows and lines. The burials were east-west oriented on the cemetery perimeter, some of them being spatially close to each other, some more loosely distanced. There was no intercutting of graves which suggests that grave-markers may have been employed. A possible step-grave and a further construction of uncertain interpretation consisting of a ledge on one side only (Dix in Philpott 1991, 69) were recorded, together with body containers in the form of stone cists. Grave goods were almost absent and late in date.

- ii. Burials In Plots (Plates LI and LII)

### Location

Further to the north, groups of graves were found placed to the rear of house plots where they appear to have been interred within separate properties. The overall

pattern of ditches points to a well ordered system of land allotment where boundaries in some cases were accompanied by fences. The chronology of the grave-goods from a number of burials which were laid in or across ditch lines would indicate that land was given over to burial use sometime during the late Roman period, i.e. at the same time as the creation of the formal cemetery.

#### Internal features

The burials were north-south and west-east oriented. They had been placed in or across the surviving boundaries of the pre-existing system of ditched plots at random. Some were accompanied by grave-goods.

### Cannington (Rahtz 1977)

(Plate LIII)

#### Location

The relationship between the cemetery at Cannington and its associated settlement in Roman times is uncertain. Three suggestions have been tentatively put forwards. The cemetery may have served a hill-fort settlement nearby as this appears to have been re-occupied in the Roman and/or later period. Alternatively, it could have been associated with the river port at Combwich on the road from Ilchester, or the settlement at Cannington itself (later a Saxon village) which has produced scatters of Roman pottery.

The cemetery was excavated during the early 60's in advance of quarrying activity. 523 inhumations were recorded and 2000-5000 estimated on the basis of the density of burial and the size of the investigated area. Beside the burials, there was evidence for undated industrial waste. Given the long period of use of the site for burial, some of the industrial waste could have been contemporary with at least one 'phase' of the cemetery.

#### Internal features

Post-holes were observed along what was interpreted as the approach road to the cemetery. It lead to a slab-marked grave for a young female on a west-east alignment. A further focal grave was located inside a circular stone structure (a shrine/mausoleum ?) on the summit of a hill in the north-eastern portion of the site where the density of burial was lower.

The burials were laid out with great care and little intercutting of graves was observed, despite the long period of use of the cemetery and the high density of graves in the southern portion of the site. This may suggest that burial markers

were employed. The burials consisted of 523 extended and supine inhumations (with only three instances of crouched skeletons). They belonged to both male and female adults but for some 60-70 graves associated with infants in discrete groups. The orientation of the graves varied within the predominant west-east alignment. Three broad groups were generically identified on the basis of the position of the heads. The north-west/south-east oriented graves followed the same alignment as the burial inside the circular structure and were accompanied by some grave goods. Similarly, the west-east oriented graves were on the same alignment as the slab-marked burial. The former had been placed in slab-lined graves with fewer goods. Finally, the graves on a south-west/north-east alignment produced the highest proportion of furnishing.

Overall, the analysis of distribution of grave goods was inconclusive. These mainly consisted of knives, a few pins of bone or copper alloy and jewellery in association with two infant groups.

The evidence from the skeletal analysis suggests that members of the same family were buried in adjoining graves.

The reviewed chronology based on C14 points to a IV century date for the cemetery with activity up to the VII century (Watts 1991).

#### Dorchester On Thames: Queensford Farm (Chambers 1987)

(Plates LIV and LV)

#### Location

In 1972, during gravel quarrying in an area located to the east of the modern site of Queensford Farm, 700 m to the north of Dorchester on Thames, part of an extensive inhumation cemetery was uncovered. The area was subjected to a short rescue intervention. More recently, in 1981, the remaining south-western part of the cemetery was excavated in advance of the construction of the Dorchester bypass. The analysis of the sequence of land-use on the site revealed several phases, the earliest being attributed to the Neolithic and Bronze Age which produced evidence for funerary activity and late field-boundary systems. During the IV century a rectangular enclosure was laid out with a broad entrance in correspondence of an earlier track way of uncertain chronology, (pre or early Roman?), enclosed by two parallel coaxial ditches running north-south. The enclosure was not arranged at right angles to the track, suggesting that by the time the former was dug, the latter had become partially obliterated. Late Romano-British burials were laid out within the enclosure and outside its southern edge on the alignment of the cemetery boundary. Heavily abraded pottery, probably

residual, was recovered from the ditches and the surrounding fields. It was dated to the late III century and taken as a *terminus post quem* for the excavation of the ditched boundary.

When the edges of the main enclosure became gradually eroded and partially silted, a second small rectangular enclosure, generically dated to the V century was laid out across the line of the former southern boundary ditch. Subsequently, burial took place outside the enclosure, being aligned on this new feature. Over 2000 people are estimated to have been buried at Queensford Farm. C 14 dating conducted on some of the bodies suggests that the cemetery was in use between the advanced IV century well into the V century.

### Internal features

Burials were west-east oriented and orderly laid down in rows which respected the enclosure ditches. The graves were located no closer than 3 m from the inside edge in the south-west corner, suggesting the presence of internal boundary banks originating from the excavation of the ditches. The cemetery was not arranged at right angles to the early Roman track way but on a west-east alignment. This may indicate that the enclosure was purposely dug for the burials. The ditch gradually filled with silt and the later graves were disposed beyond the south edge of the main enclosure. A small rectangular enclosure (F. 15) cut across the filling of the southern boundary ditch for two centrally placed graves for adult females. The stacked bodies of two adult males were laid out in the southern ditch of the small enclosure along its axis. The feature may have acted as a focus for the later graves which were aligned on this new feature. There was no evidence for burials to the east of the track.

Three graves recorded during the excavation in 1972 were found surrounded by a discontinuous series of stake-holes. No further evidence for grave markers was recorded.

Genetic anomalies from the skeletal analysis pointed to the presence of individuals who may have been related. However, with the exception of two burials, the bodies who shared the same anomalies were found buried away from each other (Harman 1981, 16).

## Dunstable (Matthews 1981)

(Plates LVI and LVII)

### Location

The Roman settlement of Durocbrivae was known from the *Itinerarium Antoninum* which lists a *statio*, *Durocbrivae*, XII milia north of *Verulamium* on Watling Street. Following modern development in the urban centre of Dunstable during the 60's and 70's, evidence of occupation of a site in Roman times emerged, suggesting that modern Dunstable may occupy the same geographical location as the Roman *Durocbrivae*. In the absence of conclusive evidence from epigraphic material, the suggested identification is confined to the realm of the hypothetical. At present, evidence for the supposed *statio* (*mansio*, *mutatio*?) has still to be found. Additionally, although features of the Roman period were uncovered in the modern city centre (namely fragments of building material), the precise extension of *Durocbrivae* and its location in relation to Dunstable remain uncertain. Excavations have been conducted only in the south-western quadrant of the modern town, at the junction of Watling Street with Ikniel Way. The area under investigation produced evidence for a late Romano-British inhumation cemetery (below) and industrial activity. A bronze smith's hearth, iron slag from the majority of the excavated pits, pottery and corn-drying kilns, some of which made use of the cemetery boundary ditches, were recorded; finally, pits and wells were further evidence of occupation of the site by a population largely involved in agricultural activity.

A cemetery of approximately 2700 m sq. was recorded 200 m away from Watling Street and 260 m from the junction of the Ikniel Way with a modern road. The cemetery was surrounded by a ditch. Three sides of the ditch and part of the enclosed area were explored. The investigation revealed that the ditch predated the burials as the former was nearly silted up when the latter took place. Additionally, further excavated features located outside the cemetery area (kilns with associated flues and pits) were cut through the ditch which would thus appear to be the earliest feature on site. The primary purpose and chronology of the ditch remain unknown. 55 inhumations were uncovered inside the enclosure; the enclosure itself was used for the burial of a further 50 bodies some of which had been placed with care in graves cut through the bottom of the ditch, some in graves cut through the upper fill; 4 horses and a dog were found in the northern ditch. Finally, few bodies were recovered from the fill of five wells just outside the enclosed area. The few goods in association with the graves, in particular coins and pottery, seem to indicate that the cemetery was in use throughout the IV century.

### Internal features

At Dunstable burials were found within an area enclosed by a pre-existing series of ditches (for a paddock?) that, prior to the lay-out of the cemetery, had already been employed as part of the flues of kilns. A striking difference between burials in different areas of the cemetery was noticed. At the northern side graves were packed closely and regularly aligned. Although the concentration of beheaded bodies was recorded here, in general the graves were found placed in nailed coffined and laid out with care, including those in the boundary ditches. Some bodies were plastered with lime. To the south, in spite of the fact that the graves were more widely spaced (with the exception of those occurring in the proximity of the southern and eastern ditches), overlapping and disturbance of earlier burials were frequently observed. The bodies were interred with disregard for their position; those found in the boundaries were cut in the ditch-fill. Moreover, four horses and a dog were found buried in the southern ditch. The excavator interpreted the contrast in burial practice between the two areas of the cemeteries as possible evidence for different periods of use (Matthews 1981, 61). The fact that in the southern area the graves were cut in the ditch-fill indicates that the boundaries had become silted, although not entirely obliterated, by the time the latest burials took place.

At Dunstable there was no evidence for substantial grave-superstructures. A probable timber cover to a grave was identified on the basis of the presence of a pair of opposing slot cuts above a skeleton.

## Ilchester

• i. Southern cemetery: Little Spittle, Townsend Close, Heave Acre (Leach 1982)

- Little Spittle (Plates LVIII and LIX)

### Location

The opportunity to examine a portion of the southern suburbs of Ilchester was provided by the construction of the A 303 Ilchester by-pass to the west of the Fosse Way during the 70' s. The most comprehensive excavated area was set in Little Spittle (5000m sq.). For comparison a smaller area in Townsend Close across the Fosse Way was sampled more selectively (1000 m sq.). In Heave Acre a 200 m sq. transept was excavated to the west of the A 37, as the eastern continuation of the By-Pass southern link road was scheduled to cross both Townsend Close and Heave Acre to merge with the existing A 37. All the areas

explored revealed similarities of conditions and phases for which general chronologies were defined.

West of the Fosse Way, at Little Spittle the first phase of occupation emerged in the form of building activity. Two timber framed constructions were identified, in addition to features including series of pits for gravel extraction, post-holes and boundary ditches. The presence of silt from slow flood water deposits indicates that the site was temporarily abandoned or that a contraction occurred probably during the Flavian period.

Above the deposit of silt, a revival of II century reoccupation was recorded in the form of two rectangular structures with stone foundations. The II century also witnessed the creation of a system of boundary ditches defining a series of regular enclosures, the arrangement of which was maintained throughout the Roman period. The ditches formed the perimeter of six plots, only partially exposed, which were organised in two rows, one at the frontage of the Fosse Way, the other at the rear of the first row. A major conflagration involving the buildings sealed the second phase of occupation.

The III century witnessed a moderate refurbishing of the earlier constructions followed by a developed phase of stone buildings in association with IV century material. At the same time the land boundaries were subjected to modifications with portions of the ditches falling into disuse and resulting in the creation of larger enclosures. Some of the ditched boundaries were then redefined by the introduction of large post-holes as fence lines.

The identification of the last period of Roman activity rests upon a break in the sequence of occupation. Collapsed ruins, floor debris and robber trenches would indicate that the buildings were demolished during the later phase of occupation. At the same time, the boundaries which had not fallen into disuse were redefined by means of irregularly spaced and discontinuous alignments of post-holes.

#### Internal features

The imposition of an inhumation cemetery upon the earlier pattern of pits and boundary structures was further evidence of a change in the use of the land. The cemetery contained a total of 43 burials of which 14 were found in the northern and 28 in the southern plot. The burials consisted of extended inhumations in wooden coffins occasionally accompanied by grave goods. It is uncertain as to the condition of the buildings while the cemetery was in use. However, avoidance of building areas and orientation of the burials with the former boundary ditches indicate a certain degree of continuity within an essential Roman context. The cemetery was dated to the advanced IV century on the basis of grave goods and stratigraphic relations of some of graves to earlier features. Burial seems to have

taken place over a number of years during which the earlier grave sites were obliterated.

- Townsend Close (LVIII and LX)

#### Internal features

Very similar phases were recorded in Townsend Close suggesting that the features recorded on either sides of the Fosse Way were contemporary.

Evidence for Roman occupation of the area emerged in the form of timber buildings the construction of which paralleled the first definition of a substantial boundary ditch lying north-east/south-west.

The subsequent periods witnessed major interventions with the refurbishment of substantial buildings in association with IV century material, and the redefinition of the boundary ditches to mark plots at the rear of the frontage buildings.

The last phase of Roman occupation witnessed a continuous use of the enclosures in the form of shallow ditches with irregular stake hole lines along either side. Accumulations of material originating from decay or destruction indicate that at this stage the buildings ceased to be occupied. As at Little Spittle, the layout of a small inhumation cemetery is further evidence for a break in the sequence of occupation.

#### Internal features

18 burials were uncovered in lines arranged according to what was left of the main boundary ditch. They probably represented a small portion of a larger cemetery. The character, content and chronology of the cemetery at Townsend Close is comparable with Little Spittle.

- Heavy Acre (Plate LVIII)

Human remains were also found scattered in Heavy Acre, where a cemetery was found to be heavily disturbed. The significance of those burials lies in the overall context of the cemetery recorded further west at Little Spittle and Townsend Close.

To the south of Ilchester, the dominant pattern is of widely scattered burials belonging to dispersed cemeteries. Notwithstanding the absence of osteological evidence, this may be indicative of burials in family plots. The reason why enclosures formerly reserved for agricultural activities were converted to burial



grounds during the IV century is uncertain. It is possible that these areas changed status when the road-frontage buildings fell into disuse (Leach 1982, *passim*).

ii. Northover Cemetery (Leach 1994) (Plate LVIII)

Location

The Northover cemetery appears to have represented the major area for late burial in Roman times, being concurrently in use with the cemeteries to the south of the town (above). It was located along the Fosse Way to the north-east of Roman Ilchester, not far from Northover, in an area of earlier field boundaries and enclosures. Unfortunately little is known of the extent and structure of this cemetery which was observed during the 18th century and generically dated to the IV century on the basis of the grave-goods (Stukeley 1724; Collinson 1791). Archaeological investigations conducted in 1982 in advanced of residential development have offered the opportunity to pursue a more systematic evaluation of the site which confirmed the antiquarian observations. 1500 burials were estimated on the basis of the extension of the enclosed area.

Internal Features

Extended and supine inhumations were found in stone, lead-lined and wooden coffins. These were west-east oriented and laid out in orderly rows within a cemetery enclosure, extending eastwards beyond the boundary ditch towards the Fosse Way. Evidence also emerged for the remains of substantial mausolea. 1500 burials were estimated (Hussey 1872, 123; St. George Grey 1934, 101) which comprised adults and infants of both sexes. Some of the graves were furnished.

### III.2.ii LOCATION: GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

(Table III)

From the few examples analysed above, it would appear that whereas some early sites continued to be in use to accommodate later inhumation burials, in many instances the late cemeteries were relocated with a shift away or towards the parent settlement.

The re-location of the late Romano-British inhumation cemeteries follows a common trend which had been long established throughout the Empire, with burial occurring *stricto sensu* outside the city walls along one or more major routes leading to the towns. Although the term 'extra mural' carries the implication inherent in the presence of the defensive circuit as physical *limes*, the distinctive function of the cemeteries and, in more general terms, the suburbs, cannot be fully understood in isolation, that is outside the urban space as a whole. The presence of the walls together with the network of related access roads must have played a major role in splitting up the land into discrete units, exerting thus a profound influence over the arrangement of the extra-mural areas and the layout of the cemeteries.

Before the middle-later II century only a few sites were provided with defences. From a topographic point of view, it would be useful to know more of the location of the cemeteries in this period, since in absence of defences their value in defining zones of urban occupation or *pomerium* would be of paramount importance. From the middle of the II century an increasing number of sites witnessed the construction of walls. The effects produced by the appearance of the wall circuits on the cemeteries are not easy to follow. Redefinition of the occupied zone may have led to cemetery relocation, although at a number of towns shift seems to have happened at times and for reasons apparently unconnected with the construction of the defensive circuits (below).

As seen in chapter I, the extension of the defended areas in Gaulish towns would indicate that urban contraction was already under way by the late III century. With reference to late Roman Britain, however, there is no evidence for a significant change in the size of the towns where the rate of occupation remained, if not static, substantially unchanged. There are a few exceptional cases. For example, at Ancaster the cemetery outside the western defences overlays a former built-up area. The evidence suggests that the construction of the city walls in the first half of the III century was followed by a partial contraction of the settlement at the periphery. A process of contraction has also been surmised for Verulamium where, from a chronological point of view, the construction of the walls sometime during the course of the III century seems to coincide with the abandonment of

the area corresponding to the modern King Harry Lane. From the evidence of coin-loss on site in comparison with the situation for the town centre purposeful desertion may have occurred at King Harry Lane (Reece 1989, 12 ff.). However, given the general problems of establishing firm chronologies for the III century, in addition to the limited extent of the excavation at King Harry Lane, the amount of available data is inadequate for satisfactory conclusions to be drawn. What would emerge is that from the II century the main, but not necessarily exclusive, use of the area was for burial which extended eastwards from the Silchester road, with avoidance of the former built-up area.

Similarly, at Ancaster uncertainty rests upon the extent and implications of the apparent suburban contraction following the construction of the city walls and relocation of the burial areas. If it is true that the layout of the new cemetery may point to a partial, if not complete, break in the sequence of occupation, it is also true that it does not necessarily imply that contraction occurred as a result of a process of decline. This may have more to do with a shift of emphasis towards the development (and related rearrangement) of certain suburban zones of occupation to the detriment of others in the context of a dynamic process of urban change affecting the overall relationship between the core and the peripheries. This even manifests itself at Verulamium where the apparent lack of evidence for extra-mural occupation during the IV century is counter balanced by the appearance of new extensive inhumation cemeteries (located away from the earlier burial sites). The evidence from the burial grounds in addition to the record of increased intra-mural activity would indicate that a considerable population was still residing in the town.

Suburban contraction seems to have also occurred at Colchester. The evidence is however controversial and the reasons behind the apparent decline of the town have not been fully understood to date. Crummy (1984 a, 16-19) has argued that assaults on the centre by Saxon raiders during the late III century would have been responsible for the abandonment of the suburban dwellings in favour of safer houses inside the city-walls which had been refurbished (?). Crummy also notices the blocking of the Balkerne (west) and Dulkan' s (north-east) Gates outside which there was evidence for fires and human remains. The distribution of the known inhumation cemeteries closer to the town in comparison with the location of the earlier burial grounds would further corroborate the hypothesis that in the later III century when inhumation became the dominant burial rite, contraction of the *pomerium* had occurred, freeing land for burial which had not been previously available (Crummy 1993, 263-4). The only problem with Crummy' s hypothesis is that the evidence pointing to invasion is inconclusive. Moreover, the wall layout does not appear to have been subjected to

modifications or refurbishing at the date of the proposed Saxon raids (Esmonde Cleary 1987). Contraction may have however occurred as the result of a slow process of decline. The evidence from the intra-mural areas is for gradual abandonment (Crummy 1984, *passim*) and the IV century cemeteries indicate that there was still a sizeable population living in town. The picture is that of progressive decline which may have begun during the III century, affecting the peripheries and then the core.

A similar situation may apply to Gloucester. It has been observed that the cemetery at Kingsholm originally developed around the margins of the *pomerium* of Glevum which had previously included the site of the Claudio-Neronian fort. As the settled area contracted, so the cemetery extended further south towards the *colonia* of Gloucester with the burials at 76 Kingsholm Road being towards the end of the sequence. Much of the area of Kingsholm became part of a major cemetery to serve the needs of the *colonia* from the end of the I century, with different portions having been probably used for burial at different times (Atkin 1988, 21). *En passant*, it is worth noting that the later inhumation burials at Kingsholm appear to have been confined to the outer area which had previously been under cultivation. The chronological evidence for Kingsholm suggests that the built-up area of I-II century had already started to give way to cultivated plots some 500 m inside the formal limits of the town through the II and probably III century. By the time of the construction of the city walls in the III century, the suburbs had already started to shrink, the burials at Kingsholm representing the final stage of contraction (Hurst 1985, 131-133) (5).

Notwithstanding the fact that in some instances the late inhumation cemeteries were laid out in formerly occupied areas (as the result of settlement contraction or redefinition of the suburban space) as a whole the choice of land for burial use seems to have been dictated by general criteria of logistic convenience, conforming thus to the situation for the earlier period. For example, in some towns areas previously used for industrial purposes were given over to burial once they had become virtually free of encumbrance. In particular, there are examples of association of burial grounds with kilns for the production of pottery and smithing activity. It is possible that abandoned kiln sites were sometimes used as cemeteries, for the remaining debris made the ground unsuitable for other purposes. At Dunstable the cemetery seems to have been laid out in an area occupied by kilns and related flues. Due to lack of conclusive information for sequences on the site and a relative chronology of the features, the excavator could not establish whether industrial activity was still carried out when the cemetery was in use. While many burials post-dated kilns and pits, from the flues

of some of the kilns calcined human bones were recovered together with iron slag. Similar slag was also found in the fill of a number of graves at the north-western end of the cemetery. Industrial activity may have still been carried out after some of the burials were dug. However, since the rubbish pits, wells and kilns were located outside the boundaries of the cemetery, the evidence would suggest that the burial ground was respected (Matthews 1981, 62). A similar situation may apply to Cannington where, due to the long period of use of the area as a cemetery, some of the (undated!) industrial waste recovered from the site could have been contemporary with 'at least one phase of burial' (Rahtz 1977, 56).

At the site at Verulam Hills Field an area formerly used for pottery production well into the advanced II century witnessed the creation of a relatively small inhumation cemetery. Burial had already taken place in the form of six Roman cremations, some of which were found in the pits associated with the kilns. This would indicate that by the end of the III century, when inhumations started to occur, the area had already been partially, if not entirely, given up for burial changing its original function. However, there was no direct physical relationship between the early cremations and the later inhumations on site.

It is tempting to read the evidence from sites such as Dunstable or Verulam Hills Field as indication of decline within contracting settlements. Anytime evidence occurs to indicate that areas given over to burial were formerly built-up or employed for industrial activity, the relocation of the cemeteries tends to be associated with dereliction of the urban peripheries during the late Roman period. However, by the same standard, in the case of Verulam Hills Field the area would have already started to 'decline' during the II century, as the presence of the cremations on site would indicate. This example has been intentionally stretched. What seems to emerge is that although in the suburbs of the Roman towns there were areas exclusively used for burial, evidence seems to indicate that the cemeteries could be laid out on land which was not primarily reserved for burial or which subsequently reverted to some other use without necessarily implying contraction. A significant example is provided by the location of the cemeteries at the Gambier Parry Lodge (Gloucester) and outside the Bath Gate (Cirencester) on grounds which had been formerly exploited for quarry extraction. It is likely that, due to the condition of the top-soil, the two sites were already considered marginal long before they had been given over to burial use. At Bath Gate the morphology and the geological nature of the area would have also affected the development of the cemetery.

That the cemeteries were not always located in marginal areas is indicated by the existence of burials on grounds which were formerly used for rural activities. The location of the cemeteries in former rural areas raises the problem of the physical relationship between the town fringe and the immediately surrounding countryside. At Winchester (Lankhills), Ashton, Ilchester (Northover), Colchester (Butt Road) and Dorchester (Poundbury), the evidence provided by the presence of ditches (associated with field systems) together with the location of the cemetery sites could be tentatively employed to define the edge of the towns.

At Lankhills the location of the late inhumations in an area of former field ditches may have been conditioned by the presence of earlier cemeteries, although a progressive shift occurred in time so that sequences of use emerged which made it possible to distinguish between areas of earlier and later burial.

At Butt Road the use of the site in period I (phase II) (III century), i.e. at the time as the earlier inhumations, seems to have been rural. The division in plots by loosely defined boundary ditches together with the absence of pits in the plots themselves corroborates this interpretation. Metal working debris and scatters of sherds recorded in the area could simply indicate the existence of hearths and kilns in the proximity of the cemetery without necessarily implying that a combination of rural and industrial activities were simultaneously carried out on site (Crummy 1993, 25-27).

At Dorchester on Thames, the location of the cemetery at Queensford Farm 1 km away from the Roman site in an area of rural activity is unique and cannot be fully understood without comparative material from other cemeteries around the town, in particular that at Church Piece (Harman *et al.* 1978). This latter falls outside the usual extra-urban position alongside an approach road to the settlement and may have acted as a wider catchment area to include a portion of the surrounding countryside (Chambers 1987, 69) (below).

Ashton and Ilchester with their cemeteries located in former private plots present a different situation. Against the mainstream of interpretation (Leach 1982, 82-88, Finch Smith 1987), in the present state of knowledge there is no conclusive proof that burials in plots at the peripheries of the settlements represented small private cemeteries of the families who held the parcel of land in which burial took place. At both sites evidence suggests that rural activity was carried out on the sites prior to the creation of the late cemeteries. By the time burial started to occur the boundaries had already been subjected to modifications. This even manifests itself at Ilchester where the subdivision in land-plots started to disappear and larger enclosures were created. Additionally, it is uncertain whether the buildings associated with the former plots were still occupied or had been abandoned when the cemetery was in use. As there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that the

parcels of land were still privately owned, it cannot be discounted that by the time burials started to take place a change of land-use and ownership had already occurred.

The last case to be analysed is the location of the inhumation cemeteries in the proximity of areas which had already been destined for burial in the pre-earlier Roman period. As seen above, the IV century cemetery at Lankhills, although exclusively used for late inhumations, developed as an extension of the northern burial area of which the Hyde Street site represents the earliest phase (I century AD) (Ch. II), with a progressive shift away from the town. The same observation may apply to Kingsholm (Gloucester): there, however, the shift occurred towards the *colonia*. It is worth noting that at the Gambier Parry Lodge further north, chronological sequences were identified on the basis of changes in burial practice (with early crouched inhumations, cremations and later extended inhumations). At Verulamium, the cemetery at Verulam Hills Field shows a different situation with apparent chronological and spatial discontinuity between the earlier cremations and the later inhumations. Finally, at Butt Road (Colchester) and Poundbury (Dorchester) continuity of burial seems to have been defined by proximity alone, with a complicated multiphase development taking place within a relatively short span of time. In particular, at Poundbury it is uncertain whether some of the early burials dated to the end of the LPRIA or the beginning of the Romano-British phase of occupation. At Butt Road the apparent change in ritual with the superimposition of a Christian cemetery over the early burials could have represented a deed of desecration.

## LOCATION: DISCUSSION

Uncertainty rests upon the significance of the shift of the burial grounds in relation to phases of sub-urban expansion/contraction. This is mainly due to the fact that the analysis of the phenomenon of cemetery relocation is often hampered by the fragmentary knowledge of the whereabouts of the early cemeteries in the context of both major and minor urban centres. As seen above, there is only a handful of cemeteries, mainly associated with the large centres, which have been subjected to extensive excavation in recent times.

In synthesis, the layout of the IV century inhumation cemeteries seems to have been regulated by a general, but not exclusive, trend towards relocation of the burial grounds. Problems arise when trying to understand the reasons for and extent of the phenomenon. In the case of those centres for which contraction has been surmised (above), relocation may have been due to reasons of convenience:

as land closer to the core became free from occupation and encumbrance, so the cemeteries shifted towards the towns. From a similar perspective, major modifications to the road-network may have rendered access to the former burial grounds inconvenient causing the relocation of the later cemeteries. For example, at Colchester when the I-III century cemetery of mixed burial rites outside the London (west) Gate passed out of use, it was the area to the south that witnessed the main concentration of burials. In this case, relocation may have been the result of interventions on the road network, with the Balkerne (London) Gate being blocked and the London Road linked to the southern Gate (Head Gate) (Hull 1958; Crummy 1980). At Cirencester the diversion of the Fosse Way just to the west of the town to enter it via Bath Gate may have caused the abandonment of the I-II century burial area alongside the Tetbury Road (i.e. the former course of the Fosse Way to the north of Bath Gate) accounting for the concentration of later burials alongside the new road-branch (McWhirr *et al.* 1982).

As a whole, the modality and character of the relocation of the cemeteries during the IV century seems to have varied from site to site, being partially conditioned by development involving the peripheries. In some instances the shift in the location of a cemetery was only relative, as for example at Winchester where the principal determinant of the layout of the late burial ground away from the town was still the Cirencester Road, in relation to which graves were dug at angles of approximately 90 degrees.

In other cases, as at Colchester and Gloucester, in comparison with the situation for the earlier burials, the distribution of the late inhumation cemeteries shows that a shift occurred towards the walled town (above). Elsewhere no defined patterns emerge to suggest that the relocation of the cemeteries took place according to specific or recurrent trends. What seems to emerge is that in some cases land re-zoning occurred at the peripheries of the settlements when new areas were needed to find room for inhumation burials. In other instances the cemeteries were relocated in areas where activity (occupational, agricultural or industrial) had already ceased as the result of contraction or re-planning of the suburbs.



### III.2.iii PLANNING OR INTERNAL FEATURES: OBSERVATIONS

(Table IV)

As seen above, there is evidence that during the late III-IV century large portions of the suburbs changed function. In some instances, formerly built-up, industrial and agricultural areas were given over to burial use whether for reasons of convenience, in order to occupy land made available following contraction, or as part of a specific planning policy finalised to the creation of new burial grounds in areas which may have necessitated them. The phenomenon, far from being an exclusive characteristic of late Roman Britain, conforms to the evidence for the earlier period, the only element of distinction being represented by the more frequent location of the early cemeteries in areas of former military activity. By comparison, what seems to emerge as an element of distinction is the apparent character of internal homogeneity displayed by the late cemeteries. Homogeneity has been explained as the result of increased religious or secular management. Accordingly, management would imply the initial choice of the sites for burial, the allocation of plots and a degree of order in the arrangement and alignment of the graves and would translate in the presence of inhumations laid out in orderly rows, often on a west-east alignment, the rows being defined by the short-axis direction of the graves. These were often contained within regular boundaries and, in some instances, marked above ground by stones, posts, ditched enclosures and mounds of earth to prevent disturbing earlier interments.

#### ORIENTATION

Based on the tradition of resurrection and the Second Coming, west-east orientation has been often associated with Christianity and taken as an indicator for the identification of Christian cemeteries in Roman Britain (Green 1977, Thomas 1981, Watts 1991). Whereas the influence of Christianity may be regarded as a major factor responsible for the widespread diffusion of west-east orientation throughout the Empire, the practice does not appear to have originated from nor to have remained an exclusive trait of the Christian cemeteries (6).

In Britain the chronological evidence suggests that burial orientation on a west-east axis was adopted as an established practice only in the IV century, probably under the stimulus of fashionable trends. Therefore, the influence of various cults could have been merely incidental. Furthermore, the Church in late Roman Britain is unlikely to have been strong enough or to have possessed powerful enough status as to impose its beliefs on the layout of the burials and make the trend customary (below).

From a different perspective, management of the burial grounds by the civic authorities may have been responsible for the introduction of general patterns of burial orientation. However, it does not entirely account for variations in the modality of occurrence of the phenomenon. Evidence shows that various ranges of alignments could occur in specific areas of a cemetery and within individually disposed lines of graves for no immediately apparent reasons (i.e. each grave was not necessarily oriented on the adjacent one).

Even allowing for some degree of restriction imposed by pre-existing features or the morphology of the landscape, the idea that chance alone would have been responsible for much of the predominant alignment to fall into the west-east arc, with any skeleton standing an equal chance of having its head to the west or to the east, has been questioned. In many instances, the evidence seems to indicate that there was no randomness in either the orientation or the spatial position of the graves. For example, cemeteries such as Poundbury (Dorchester), Lankhills (Winchester), Butt Road (Colchester), Ashton and Cannington, seem to share common trends with large numbers of similarly aligned graves located within specific areas. However, the significance of variations within a general pattern of orientation is still uncertain. In the specific case of the sites mentioned above, variations have been generically related to chronological sequences. Similarly, at Maldon Road (Colchester) the excavator observed that the three predominant alignments of the graves were not just due to mere chance, but to some deliberate intervention, although with not entirely accurate results (Crummy 1993b, 236-244).

More specifically, the idea that most graves in cemeteries like Cannington may have been oriented according to the solar arc has stimulated the research of a connection between variations in the predominant alignments and seasonal change (Rahtz 1978). The seasonal model is based on the analysis of alignments within a range of a few degrees around one or more axis matching the solar arc. In theory, by the application of the model it should be possible to discover at what time of the year a burial took place and, eventually, based on more recent comparable material, establish the causes of death from diseases that were prevalent at that particular season. However, the method has proved to be unsatisfactory as the data do not always seem to fit the expected results (Kendall 1982, Brown 1983).

The layout of the burial to avoid disturbing previous interments is a further aspect intimately linked to orientation. The respectful attitude towards the graves may have been among the reasons why the practice became of paramount importance in the late inhumation cemeteries, accounting for a general degree of order among the burials (whether on a north-south or west-east alignment)

together with variations in the predominant patterns of orientation and in relation to the position of the head.

As with west-east orientation, the tendency towards a form of respect for the material remains of the dead has long been related to the influence of Christianity (Green 1977, Watts 1991). There is no doubt that religious factors, whether or not in the context of Christianity, played a major role. However, hygienic reasons cannot be discounted, if only to avoid the unpleasantness of uncovering by accident a putrefying corpse, especially in crowded cemeteries with a fairly high concentration of inhumation burials.

## BOUNDARIES

Local topographic and geographic features (roads, boundaries, buildings of some religious significance, etc.) are also bound to have exerted some influence on the orientation of the burials.

The presence of boundary ditches, whether occurring in isolation or as part of complex field-systems, is a recurrent feature of early (see Ch. II) and late Romano-British cemeteries alike. With reference to the latter, in a few instances it has been possible to detect the presence of partially defined cemetery enclosures, as at Dunstable, at the Crown Building site (Dorchester) or at the formal cemetery at Ashton. However, there is little evidence for ditched boundaries being intentionally dug to enclose a portion of ground for burial. Queensford Farm (and possibly Northover at Ilchester and the Crown Building at Dorchester) is one of the few sites for which there is indication that an enclosure may have been laid out in view of the creation of the cemetery: the IV century boundary-enclosure did not follow the alignment of the main earlier feature, the track way, which had probably disappeared by the time burial started to occur. The evidence from Queensford Farm is consistent with what has been observed in relation to other major areas for burial around Dorchester on Thames, in particular at Church Piece where the late cemetery seems to have been enclosed by a ditch (Harman *et al.* 1978). In the majority of the cases, it is uncertain whether the cemetery boundaries were intentionally dug to enclose the burials or were part of an earlier system of field-division. This would conform to a widespread trend which has been observed at a few early and many late cemetery sites, suggesting that pre-existing land-boundaries were respected in the alignment of the graves, conditioning to a certain extent the orientation of the burials themselves. The fact that in many cases the boundaries did not remain static is probably due to pressure exerted by the interments on the available space with the ditches falling progressively into disuse, as the cemeteries developed, and being subsequently

used for burial. This even manifests itself at Lankhills where a progressive development of the area was detected on the basis of the spatial distribution of sexed and dated burials in relation to pre-existing ditches which had acted as boundaries at the early stage of the cemetery.

In some cases the presence of enclosures and boundary ditches has been associated with the Christian cemeteries. At Poundbury, ditches appear to have separated the alleged Christian burials (Main Cemetery) from surrounding pagan graves (Peripheral Cemeteries) (Green 1982). A similar situation may apply to Ashton where the proposed Christian burial area was carefully enclosed by ditches whereas the 'non-Christian' inhumations were found scattered in plots to the north and east of the formal cemetery, their layout having been guided by the Roman road. In both cases, the presence of ditches may have acted as internal boundaries within extensive cemetery grounds to mark areas allocated for the burial of individuals according to specific religious beliefs.

## GRAVE MARKERS

In conformity with the situation for the earlier period, at present, there is little evidence that gravestones were employed in the late Romano-British cemeteries. Similarly, there is only a handful of sites which have provided evidence for mausolea. In a few instances, these have been found located in preferential areas as at Poundbury (where the monuments were concentrated in the Main Cemetery), or located on the same alignment, as at Verulam Hills where a pathway appears to have flanked the tombs. Possible mausolea have been identified at Northover and Cannington. At the latter site the alleged mausoleum appears to have acted as a focal feature for later burials to cluster around it.

Less substantial markers seem to have been a more common feature although there is no evidence that these were employed on a regular basis. At Queensford Farm (Harman *et al.* 1978, 4) and at Northover post- and stake-holes, which might point to the presence of markers, were recorded. Elsewhere, it has been suggested that the mound of earth on the burial pits may have remained visible for the grave-diggers to avoid previous interments, as at Cannington (Rahtz 1977) and Lankhills (Clarke 1979). Finally at Kingsholm some of the later burials displayed evidence for a slot at the rear of the grave.

Individual markers in the form of posted structures and ditched enclosures have been identified at a number of cemeteries and, with the mausolea, tentatively interpreted as foci of special significance which attracted later graves. Although not necessarily visible above ground, timber vaults and covers must have also represented an element of distinction in terms of burial, acting as *foci* of special

significance. For example, timber vaults for single and double burials were recorded at Butt Road (period II). At Kelvedon late timber vaults were found concentrated in a specific area of the cemetery. Finally, at Poundbury the grave of an adult male had been placed between two infants. The implication of the expenditure for monuments such as masonry mausolea or timber vaults may provide indication that the burials belonged to individuals of some importance within the community (Rodwell 1988, 48). The location within a particular area of the cemetery together with the influence exerted on the layout of spatially associated burials could also imply that the monuments were built for influential members of a community.

In the majority of the cases individual markers have been related to the presence of family groups (as at Poundbury, Butt Road and Lankhills) at least when evidence occurs to suggest the presence of two or more burials of individuals of all ages and both sexes. Posted structures have been identified at Dunstable. Graves enclosed by funerary ditches have been recorded at Lankhills, Poundbury and Butt Road. At Lankhills and Poundbury small ditches appear to have been intentionally dug to enclose focal graves. At Butt Road later clusters of graves were related to the presence of pre-existing plots which had already been employed for the interment of members of the same family during the previous phase of burial. The small ditched enclosure at Queensford Farm (F. 15) for the interment of two adult females may have also conditioned the orientation of later graves occurring outside the ditched boundary, acting therefore as a focal feature. Focal features may also include religious buildings, particularly churches. A summary of the positive and negative evidence of Christian churches in Roman Britain has been recently provided by Thomas (1981) and Watts (1991). In comparison with the northern regions of the Empire, evidence for the so-called cemetery churches or martyria in Britain is at present still poor and fragmentary (Chapter I). Only in a few cases is the interpretation of apsidal buildings as cemetery churches convincing. Among the sites under investigation Verulam Hills Field and Butt Road have provided significant evidence for the presence of potential churches in association with Christian burials which appear to have focused on them.

Although uncertainty rests upon the interpretation of the role the individuals exerted in life, a religious importance may have been attached to the burial located in the apsidal building at Butt Road. Similarly, the mausolea at Poundbury may have also been associated to prominent individuals within the Christian (?) community (Watts 1990). It is worth noting that, at present, there is no conclusive evidence that the alleged Christian mausolea (Watts 1991) at Poundbury and Butt Road represented martyria.

## INTERNAL FEATURES: DISCUSSION

To summarise, the apparent order within the late Romano-British cemeteries suggests some form of control over their use and that the cemeteries developed according to a pre-arranged plan which had to evaluate and overcome natural constraints and obstacles. Evidence also suggests the presence of outstanding groups of burials. Memorial tombs and enclosed graves appear to have been related to family groups of some importance and wealth (as at Poundbury where a mausoleum had painted plaster walls and contained inhumations in stone sarcophagi and plastered burials). Whereas the few mausolea dating to the IV century seem to occur predominantly, but not exclusively, in the proposed Christian cemeteries (e.g. Poundbury and Butt Road, Watts 1991, *passim*) and, more generically, in burial grounds associated with major towns, grave-enclosures and wooden structures have been recorded in both Christian and pagan cemeteries, their number apparently decreasing in favour of the mausolea. As a whole, the distribution of grave markers seems to be concentrated in South East England where a tradition of burial enclosures and four-posted structures (timber mausolea?) was probably rooted in the period preceding the Roman conquest. The occurrence of markers to enclose a single grave or a group of burials in both the early (see Ch. II) and the late Romano-British cemeteries may indicate that forms of pre-Roman practice survived into the IV century virtually unaltered, merging with imported trends which were found to be consistent with the local burial tradition. From this perspective, the mausolea may have been introduced from the Continent to be often employed in the Christian cemeteries without necessarily representing a conceptually alien introduction. What seems to emerge is that mausolea, ditched enclosures and other similar forms of markers were conceived for the burial of individuals who shared the same religious beliefs and probably belonged to the same family group (as the skeletal analysis conducted on the bodies has often demonstrated, see above III.2.1, *passim*) or for individuals who exerted a leading role within the community.

Order within a cemetery implies a degree of respect towards earlier burials. As only a handful of cemeteries has provided conclusive evidence for the employment of markers on a regular basis, the hypothesis that stones or surplus soil mounded over the graves would have provided sufficient marking for the burials to be accurately sited in relation to each other sounds reasonable (Clarke 1979): in this case it has to be assumed that a form of constant maintenance was exerted over the development of the cemetery.

Overlapping of graves in most cases does not appear to be significant and can be explained in terms of long sequences of use of a specific area for burial which may have become over crowded through time (7). This seems to have been the case at Ancaster and Butt Road (Period II). A sequence of occupation and re-occupation may apply to Cirencester where disturbance is better understood when considering that burial probably started to take place during the late III century until the beginning of the V century and that the geological nature of the area together with the presence of the amphitheatre to the south-west may have imposed limits to the development of the cemetery. The phenomenon known as multiple burials is something different from simple overlapping: in this case a component of intention may have been involved in the re-use of the same piece of ground for a second or subsequent burial. This surely applies to those cases where the bodies were orderly laid down on the same alignment one above the other, as at Dunstable, Queensford Farm, Kingsholm and Butt Road where the skeletal remains also showed genetic affinities. However, in the case of overcrowded cemeteries stacking of burials or multiple burials may have also been accidental.

In the absence of specific markers, discrete and nucleated groups of burials have been also identified on the basis of simple proximity and alignment of the graves in rows and lines. Similarly, areas devoid of graves or slight deviations in certain rows and lines have been frequently observed. The presence of obstacles such as trees or bushes (which would have left little, if any, traces), earlier graves or topographic features are among the factors which may partially account for variations in the internal organisation of the cemeteries. In some instances a negligible deviation in rows and lines seems to have induced a corresponding negligible change in the orientation of the graves.

Within the cemeteries isolated burials or groups of burials may indicate an occasional breakdown of the overall administration of the cemetery or be the result of an intentional segregation due to religious beliefs, as at Poundbury where the peripheral areas of the cemetery have been related to non-Christian burials. In some cases, the occurrence of isolated interments could be interpreted as evidence for cemetery growth as at Dorchester on Thames or at Northover (Ilchester) where later burials were located outside the primary ditched boundaries.

Finally, grouping of graves has been related to the presence of family nuclei, as at Butt Road, on the basis of individuals of both sexes and different ages sharing similarities in ritual, furnishing, body containers and, in some instances, genetic traits. In this case the spatial organisation of the burials seems to have been dictated by something more than simple convenience of cemetery layout and

could reflect the existence of a group of individuals who wished to be buried together observing similar rites.



### III.3 EVIDENCE FOR CEMETERIES CONCURRENTLY IN USE IN THE SAME AREA

Only at Winchester, Colchester, and Ashton have recent excavations revealed the presence of multiple cemeteries being created and concurrently used during the IV century. However, at a number of major towns such as Gloucester, Verulamium-St. Albans and Dorchester, and minor urban centres, namely Ancaster, Ilchester and Dorchester on Thames, chance discoveries during the last two centuries and watching briefs seem to indicate that the phenomenon was relatively common, and consistent with what is known, albeit fragmentarily, about the location of the early cemeteries (8). Attempts have been made to explain the presence of two or more contemporary burial areas.

In some cases, the coexistence of cemeteries displaying different rites has been taken as an evidence for different concurrent religious beliefs within the urban community. It has been argued that, due to the Christians being exclusive in death as in life, the custom of setting aside special plots for their use, not to be buried with the pagans, and the tendency to dictate specific rites may be expected to have occurred as a generalised phenomenon (Green 1977, 46).

This has been suggested for Ashton (Watts 1991, 64-66) where the character of the Formal Cemetery would be consistent with its interpretation as the ground for the burial of Christians. At Ashton the main cemetery contained carefully laid out and unfurnished graves whereas randomly aligned and furnished burials were located in plots at the rear of properties. At Kingsholm (Gloucester) in the northern area of the site (i.e. Gambier Parry Lodge) burials were scattered on a north-south alignment with no apparent order. Further south, along the Kingsholm Road, evidence emerged for early (?) inhumations on a predominantly north-south alignment and later (?) west-east oriented and unfurnished inhumations which had been carefully laid out in regular rows. In the specific case of Kingsholm, it was suggested that the cemetery areas may have been progressively re-organised, whether due to changes in fashion or ritual (following the possible introduction of a sun cult, Atkin 1987) or both.

At Ilchester recent excavations and watching briefs have revealed the presence of two cemetery areas being concurrently in use and displaying a different character, one located to the north of the town at Northover, the other to the south at Little Spittle, Heavy Acre and Townsend Close. The site at Northover seems to have represented the main cemetery for late burial. If the southern and northern cemeteries were concurrently in use, as the redefined chronology of Northover seems to suggest, it cannot be discounted that the latter may have been used by Christians. At present there is insufficient evidence for an unequivocal

interpretation to be attempted. Status, as displayed by the Northover cemetery, may have also played a part in the creation of a discrete area to be destined for the burial of the wealthy *stratum* of the urban community.

Finally, at Colchester burial grounds located to the south and west of the town (including the cemetery at Butt Road), seem to have been concurrently in use, displaying a different kind of internal organisation. A cemetery was located 200 m away from the southern wall at the roundabout of the proposed relief road (Crummy 1993a, 203-235). Thirty-four inhumations were recorded in the grounds of St. John's Abbey and generically assigned to the late III-IV century. The burials were west-east oriented although with variations which may indicate different chronological phases. Grave goods were mostly confined to children. In Crouch Street, 30 m to the north-west, a few inhumations heavily disturbed by later activity may have been part of the same cemetery (Shimmin 1993, 245-256). Finally, eighteen inhumations were found at the north end of Maldon Road on the line of the southern section of the inner relief road (Crummy 1993b, 236-244). Burials were north-east/south-west, north-west/south east and approximately east-west oriented in three homogenous groups pointing to three possible phases of burials. The alignment of two groups appears to have been conditioned by the road from the Balkerne Gate. The third group, consisting of west-east aligned graves, appears to have resulted from deliberate orientation, although with not very accurate results. Despite the close proximity with the cemetery at Butt Road (located only 150 m to the south-east) and the chronological similarity, the graves at Maldon Road were less compact in their distribution and less consistent in their orientation. Whether this should be taken as evidence of the non-Christian nature of the cemetery is uncertain. Nonetheless, the contrast in layout between Butt Road and the other IV century burial grounds, with particular reference to Maldon Road, cannot be ignored.

Besides the example of multiple cemeteries being concurrently in use and displaying distinctive layouts and internal features, there are instances where variations occurred in the arrangement of groups of burials within the same cemetery.

At Poundbury (Dorchester) Cemetery 2 displayed north-south aligned graves with associated furnishings, Cemetery 3 west-east oriented, undisturbed and essentially unfurnished burials which may have been associated with Christians. At Lankhills Feature 6 was characterised by the careful interment of the bodies and the inclusion of a newly born infant. It was interpreted as a plot for the burial of Christians who may have belonged to the same family (Watts 1991, 64-66). However, the feature itself displayed a syncretistic nature in the concentration of grave goods in two burials and the simultaneous presence of symbols of a

possible Christian content. The unique location in a definitely pagan context makes the presence of a cluster of 'Christian' burials, if not impossible, at least anomalous.

At Butt Road, in contrast with the inhumations assigned to Period I (phase III) which were on a north-south alignment and furnished, the inhumations of Period II were characterised by west-east orientation and absence of grave-goods, focusing around an apsidal building (a church?).

In conformity with what has been observed above, variations within the same burial ground could also be explained as the result of changes in fashion or creed, the arrangement of the graves also entailing phases of burial within the sequential development of a cemetery.

Cemeteries in use at the same time do not always display different burial practices. In this case, the creation and/or use of more cemeteries in the same locality may have simply been the result of a policy dictated by practical reasons and finalised to ensure that all the main suburban areas were provided with the necessary space to bury the dead. This may apply to Dorchester on Thames. As mentioned above, Queensford Farm is one of the extensive inhumation cemeteries known in the proximity of the town. A second major area for burial was located at Church Piece 1200 m north-west of the walled town. During development in the 19th century burials and buildings with stone foundation were observed, the latter being still visible in aerial photography. Recent trenching has revealed the presence of a cemetery enclosure for IV century inhumations (Harman *et al.* 1978). At some stage the burials seem to have spread into an adjoining enclosure to the south. The graves were unfurnished, west-north-west and east-south-east oriented, and orderly laid down. The area was apparently in use down to the end of the V century and beyond (?). It is unknown whether the boundary was contemporary with the cemetery, as at Queensford Farm, or re-employed. A third cemetery was located at Meadowside Piece along the probable line of the Roman Road south-east of the town. Finally, isolated late burials have been observed to the south and south-west of the town. The most striking feature which is shared by the main burial areas around Dorchester on Thames is their distance from the town-walls. The cemeteries seem to have contained discrete groups of graves and may have served the inhabitants of the suburbs acting, at the same time, as wider catchment areas for the rural population. In particular, the area at Church Piece appears to fall outside the usual urban extra-mural position alongside a major approach road, being also separated from the town by the River Thames (Chambers 1987, 69). This hypothesis would conform to the distribution network of the burial grounds themselves and to the presence of boundaries (which may

reflect on the use and ownership of land in the area immediately around the town). The fact that Dorchester on Thames may have acted as a focus for the surrounding area is not surprising: evidence suggests that the town probably exerted a local administrative role of some importance (9).

The hypothesis of an interconnection between town and its immediate countryside may also apply to Dorchester (Dorset). According to Woodward (1993), the cemetery at Poundbury and other strictly organised cemeteries located to the west of the town (e.g. Crown Building) may have served a local rural population and the congregation of one or more Christian churches within the Roman Durnovaria. The size of the buried population from the western cemeteries would indicate the presence of a fairly large Christian community (or scatter of communities) within and around the Roman town. It is reasonable to assume that both practical and religious factors played a major role over the location (and, in some instances, the re-location) of the burial grounds around Dorchester.

Reasons of space may account for the presence of the small inhumation cemetery at Victoria Road which shows similarities with Lankhills in terms of chronological phases of development, layout and grave furnishing. According to Clarke (1979, 7, 11), Victoria Road was created when the main northern cemetery became overcrowded around 350 AD. Victoria Road may have thus represented a late extension of Lankhills where a similar process of expansion took place by 350 AD, with burial occurring in the former cemetery boundary ditch (F 12) and beyond. At present, it is not possible to understand the reasons behind the creation of an inhumation cemetery at Victoria Road where the location of earlier burials and the morphology of the ground (i.e. a small stream to the north) were already a constraint to the potential extensive development of the area. Given the evidence for the presence of two discrete groups of burials (coffined, mainly unfurnished and carefully laid out graves on a west-east alignment were separated from furnished inhumations of a more casual character cutting into each other), a movement of pagan burial practice towards a position closer to Christianity may have occurred (Clarke 1979, 348). However, the hypothesis that Victoria Road represented a Christian cemetery is inconclusive. In absence of more substantial evidence, a change in practice alone does not necessarily provide an indication for a change in beliefs, as the former may have simply resulted from a desire to conform to a dominant burial fashion. In addition to this, the close similarity between the burials at Victoria Road and those located in the main cemetery at Lankhills would stand out against the interpretation of Victoria Road as a ground for the burial of Christians. What seems to emerge is that at Winchester the Northern cemetery developed progressively away from the town walls and that the burial area at Victoria Road, although extra-mural, represented a retreat from

the limits of the overcrowded cemetery at Lankhills. This could indicate that when 'control' began to break down in the later IV century, some of the burials returned closer to the city walls (Kjolbye-Biddle 1995).

## NOTES TO CHAPTER III

(1) At Trentholme Drive (York) (Wenham 1968) there is evidence for cremations alone until AD 180; then cremation and inhumation appear to have been practised together until about AD 280, with inhumation becoming predominant. At Chichester (Down & Rule 1971) cremation dated from AD 70 to the late II century; then inhumation prevailed with cremation occurring sporadically. The cemetery to the east of the City of London and north of the river Thames established during the late I - early II century shows that cremation was the preferential rite during the early phase of use of the site; cremation and inhumation seem to have been practised together well into the III century with inhumation gaining in popularity to become the universal mode of burial before the end of the following century (Barber *et al* 1990).

On the introduction of cremation in Roman-Britain and the impact of the new burial practice on pre-existing traditions see also Black 1986 and Philpott 1991.

(2) See e.g. Lankhills (Winchester) and Bath Gate (Cirencester). However, at Kelvedon the proportion of cremations dated to the advanced IV century is remarkably high. On the continent the phenomenon of late cremations is particularly apparent in northern Gaul (Van Doorselaer 1967) where regional variations are recorded in the context of urban settlements, and where cremation remained popular in the countryside well into the IV century (Nenquin 1953).

(3) See Athanas., *Vita Antonii* XXVI, 968; Tertull., *De Resurrectione* CXXVII; Min. Felix, *Octavius* II, 4. The practice of inhumation, however, was too widespread to owe anything directly to the Jewish tradition.

(4) Against the suggestion of the cost of fuel as a cause, the earlier inhumations seem to have belonged to the rich class. Similarly, the idea that the change from cremation to inhumation was due to fashion has been formulated in too general terms: for example, it has been argued that the opportunity for ostentation provided by the *sarcophagi* introduced from Asia Minor or Attica may have contributed to the increasing popularity of inhumation. However, if it is true that under the Emperor Hadrian in the II century a sudden flourish of the art of *sarcophagi* carving occurred in concomitance with the gradual but increasing replacement of cremation by inhumation, it is also true that, in some cases, the *sarcophagi* were used as containers for ashes (Mansuelli 1981) providing, thus, no exclusive evidence for a particular rite.

(5) With reference to Colchester and Gloucester, decline may have been caused by the development of the nearby centres of London and Cirencester respectively, the progressive growth of the latter sites having probably overshadowed economically the former (Millett 1990, 87).

(6) There are cases, although exceptional, of known Christian cemeteries which do not seem to follow the rule (Toynbee 1971, Green 1977). Similarly, there is evidence to suggest that west-east orientation was adopted by pagans. With reference to late Roman Britain, the practice may have originated in response to a sun cult, closely associated with that of Mithras. The worship of the conflated concept of the Sol-Invictus and Apollo characterised the family of Constantine the Great. For Britain this may have had a particular meaning through the person of Constantius, Constantine's father, who was responsible for the recovery of Britain after the attempt at secession by Carausius and Allectus (AD 293-296) (Macdonald 1979, 425-6).

(7) That disturbance may have occurred by accident and not just as a result of disregard towards early burials emerges from the letter of Sidonius Apollinaris in the V century (Reece 1977).

(8) The picture for the early period is very fragmentary. Nonetheless there are sites which have produced evidence for the existence of two or more burial grounds being concurrently in use. See for example, Dorchester and Braughing (Ch. II). See also Baldock (Stead & Rigby 1986, *passim*).

(9) According to the epigraphic evidence, the possible temple to Jupiter at Dorchester on Thames was erected by a *beneficiarius consularis*, Marcus Varius Severus, who may have been a legionary officer seconded to the staff of the Governor in London to help with provincial administration (Branigan 1994b, 100).

*En passant*, it is worth noting that the evidence for Dorchester on Thames in the LPRIA seems to point to the presence of a possible major gateway community at Dyke Hill which would have acted as a focus for trading between the Dobumni, the Catuvellauni and the Atrebates. With the coming of Rome the importance of the frontier zone diminished and Dorchester on Thames became a 'minor' walled town (Miles 1988, 63). It is tempting to see the presence of cemeteries around Dorchester on Thames as evidence that the town continued to act as a focal point for the surrounding rural communities. This hypothesis is even more significant when considering the pattern of densely packed open settlements the origin of which can be traced back to the Iron Age (Hingley 1984).

# CHAPTER IV

## MANAGEMENT OF THE CEMETERIES

### (A Few Remarks On Legal Aspects)

#### IV.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to detect evidence for cemetery management, in the previous two chapters attention was paid to separate aspects of location and internal layout of the burial areas by introducing, when possible, chronological distinctions. With reference to the late inhumation cemeteries, a brief account of the evidence for two or more burial grounds being concurrently in use was also provided.

In the present chapter, management has been addressed in the form of a general discussion of the potential role exercised by the civic or religious authorities in matters of cemetery organisation.

The attempt to analyse legal and administrative aspects regulating the burial grounds may sound ambitious or fruitless since the available information on the subject is notoriously inconsistent. This is only one facet of a more general problem which stems from uncertainty over the administration of the extra-mural areas as a whole (below).

Whereas the modalities of, and the provision for, the funerals in the Roman Empire are fairly well documented (Lewis & Reinhold 1966, 282; Toynbee 1971, 43-64; Liversidge 1976, *passim*), all that is known about the disposal of the bodies in legal terms is derived from Cicero: according to the legislation of the *XII Tabulae*, burial had to take place outside the built-up area of Rome (1).

In conformity with an Empire-wide trend, the Romano-British cemeteries developed in the suburban areas. Whether for reasons of easy access, or for the psychological need to locate the dead in a position of good visibility (Salway 1985, 694), the road-sides became the focus of burial. The desire to display both wealth and care of the ancestors may have also played a major role in deciding on the location of a grave to be easily noticed from the road. In addition to this, what seems to have been a Roman attitude, the fear of the spirit of the dead, might have originally conditioned the removal of the material body as a source of pollution (Philpott 1991, 236), and the consequent creation of two distinct areas, one *intra*



*moenia* for the living, and one *extra moenia* for the dead. Finally, hygienic factors may have contributed to enforce burials outside the built-up areas.

Exceptional cases of intra-mural burials are not unknown. For instance, in Attica the tombs of rich citizens were often located within the city-walls, and regarded as public monuments in their own rights (Owen 1992, 184, note 23). With reference to Britain, a cremation dated to the late III-early IV century has been found within the Roman walls at Alcester (Hughes 1964). Two later Roman inhumations have been respectively uncovered at Lincoln (Colyer & Gilmour 1978, 104) and Colchester (Crossan in Crummy 1980, 265-266) within buildings which may have represented intra-mural churches.

Roman laws also existed to prevent the desecration or disturbance of a *locus religiosus*. (i.e. a sacred place under the protection of the gods) (2). However, there is no direct written reference to any official planning or maintenance of the cemeteries by the local authorities. This has given rise to the all too widely accepted belief that the cemeteries whether associated with small or large towns, developed as 'spontaneous germination' along the major routes. In particular, the frequent absence of overall rational planning prior to the diffusion of inhumation during the II-III century and the rise of Christianity, has been taken as evidence for the lack of any public control, i.e. management, over the growth of the burial grounds.

## IV.2 THE LAND OF A TOWN

### IV.2.i *POMERIUM, TERRITORIUM, VICUS* AND 'TOWN ZONES'

Although outside the main scope of the present work, before dealing with specific aspects of cemetery location and internal organisation, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of some administrative terms which recur in the literary sources with reference to the 'land' of a town. The author does not pretend to offer an in-depth analysis of the subject matter. Her aim is to provide some introductory remarks for a better understanding of the content of this chapter in the light of limitations posed by the controversial nature of the available evidence.

#### *POMERIUM*

In the context of the foundation of Rome the term *pomerium* maintained a religious meaning. In the classical use, it referred to an ideal boundary which often comprised the town defences and a small outer area kept clear of buildings. How the line of the *pomerium* may have related to urban/suburban expansion, is uncertain.

#### *TERRITORIUM*

The definition of urban territory is fraught with difficulties. From continental examples, chartered (*lex data*) and planned (*forma*) territories were regarded as extensions of the towns, and subjected to *centuriatio* (land division). They were assigned by the central government to both *coloniae* (*lex coloniae*) of Roman citizens (*Ius Romanum*) and *municipia* of Roman and, more frequently, Latin citizens, i.e. with restricted voting and other rights (*Ius Latinum*). With reference to Britain, there is no evidence of individual charters of the Roman colonies (Wacher 1975, 39). Indications of land division in the province are also ephemeral. Some relics survive north of Rochester (Kent) and near Ripe (Sussex) (Dilke 1971, 191).

The apparent absence of conclusive historical and archaeological evidence for *territoria* in Roman Britain does not exclude the possibility that the land surrounding a colony may have still been cultivated from the town itself. Rivet has tentatively plotted the distribution of villas in relation to some major towns. As a result, he has noticed that the largest groups of villas occurred not around the *civitas* capitals but around secondary towns. This observation was taken as

evidence that the land around the capitals was worked from the town, as it probably was from the *coloniae* (Rivet 1966, 101-110).

It has been argued that the distribution of villas around 'lesser towns' could simply reflect the presence of large estates near the *civitas* capitals. For instance, Wacher has observed the recurrence of areas free of villas around urban centres such as Cirencester, Leicester, Verulamium, Dorchester and Canterbury. In particular, with reference to the first four towns, the areas under investigation appeared to contain one villa only. The status of these same towns may have been upgraded during the later Empire, based on the absence of the tribal suffix in the place-names on the Antonine Itinerary (Wacher 1975, 19).

It is tempting to see a possible correlation between the recurrent pattern observed by Wacher and the organisation of the *territorium* of some high-rank towns.

### VICI

The term *vicus* often defined a district or a quarter of a town. With regards to Roman Britain, conclusive evidence for the existence of *vici* is provided by an inscription from Lincoln (Wacher 1975, *passim*).

The term was also used to indicate a civilian nucleated settlement originally attached to a military installation. For instance, an inscription from Carriden, a fort by the Antonine Wall, was setup by the *Vikani Consistentes Veluniate* (Frere 1987, 129).

Finally, *vicus* could refer to the central towns of some *civitates peregrinae*, i.e. citizenship of self-governing communities which often comprised the existing tribal areas or sizeable nucleated settlements. In the case of *Petuarina* (Brough on Humber), the *vicus* may have represented the *civitas* capital of the Parisi (Frere *ibid.*, 197).

Based on the information provided by Ulpian (Jurist), what seems to link the different kinds of *vici* is the fact that they all had specific physical locations within the jurisdiction of their respective authorities (*res publica*) (Salway 1985, 588 ff.).

### 'TOWN ZONES'

By comparing *miliaria* and the *Itinerarium Antoninum*, Rodwell has attempted to define 'town zones'. He has argued that the mileage between the Romano-British towns on the Itinerary was calculated from the town-edge, including the suburbs, and not from the town centre. The size of the town-zones appears to have varied according to the status of the urban settlement.

With reference to the colonies, these zones seem to have been too small to coincide with the *territoria coloniae*, as known in other areas of the Empire, but too large to be included in the *pomeria*. Rodwell has argued that the town-zones of the colonies may have coincided with the legionary territories, since the foundation of the former had been preceded by the creation of a fortress on the same site (Rodwell 1975). However interesting it may be, this explanation is controversial: it does not seem to take into consideration the fact that the Antonine Itinerary was compiled in the early III century, and therefore unlikely to refer to a much earlier situation. It is however known that the *territorium* originally assigned to a fort could be returned to the central government once the military site had become redundant, and that the same *territorium* could be re-assigned to a newly founded *colonia*.

The meaning of the terms described above is not always clear, their use in the Latin sources being often contradictory, as in the case of *pomerium* or *vicus*. Similarly, *territorium* could refer to a territory which was administrated by a 'town, or to a tribal area.

It is also apparent that the meaning of the terms changed as time went by. As a result, during the Late Empire *colonia* and *municipium* were used to signify not only the administrative status but also the rank of a promoted settlement.

Finally, it is apparent that no specific term was used in antiquity to refer to the suburban areas. The Latin equivalent to 'town zone', as defined by Rodwell, does not appear in legal documents. This should not come as a surprise: from the brief analysis conducted above, the administrative terms used in the sources, with particular reference to *civitas*, *colonia* and *municipium*, determined limits of jurisdiction. As a result, the suburbs could be either physical units, as in *vici*, or jurisdictional areas, as in *coloniae*, etc., according to the status of the parent settlement. Unfortunately, the ambiguity of the sources gives rise to a series of interpretational problems: in the absence of conclusive evidence, the modality of administration of the suburbs, including the cemeteries, and the relationship between core and periphery are often uncertain.

#### IV.2.ii ASPECTS OF CEMETERY LOCATION

As seen in chapters II and III, in Roman Britain the cemeteries were often located in open land or in formerly occupied areas of the suburbs which had been employed for industrial and/or small scale rural activity.

In many instances the location of the early cemeteries took into consideration practical factors such as the potential growth of the parent towns. At York the distribution of the cemeteries indicates that expansion did not occur as expected so that the later burial grounds were relocated closer to the town. Similarly, at St Pancras (Chichester) the cemetery developed towards the built-up area (Jones 1984, 37; Esmonde Cleary 1985, 75). At Winchester, on the other hand, the early burials were located just to the north of the later wall circuit with the IV century inhumation cemetery expanding further away from the town. In the previous chapter reference was also made to instances of re-location of the late inhumation cemeteries in relation to changes in the road layout and (re-)definition of the walled areas, as in the case of Bath Gate (Cirencester) and Butt Road (Colchester).

The archaeological evidence from both the early burial grounds and the extensive inhumation cemeteries created during the IV century, seems to point to general management of the space in the suburbs. Problems arise when trying to interpret the available evidence in terms of legal aspects regulating the allocation of land for burial use. Two main questions should be addressed: *in primis*, whether the town owned (or at least disposed of) land and, if so, to what extent. Consequently, whether the analysis of the cemeteries may throw further light on aspects of land management.

The existence of private properties within urban settlements is well documented in the form of official transactions which refer to the housing market (Casey 1985, 43-48).

Additionally, evidence of boundaries in the form of ditches or fence-lines defining plots in association with strip buildings and, behind the street frontages, the presence of field systems merging in the immediate countryside point to the existence of private properties at the periphery of the towns.

From Continental examples it has been suggested that plots in the settlements may have been rented or purchased (Finch Smith 1987, 33). It is also known that some towns held, and could issue rules for the leasing-out, and cultivation of, public land and urban property (Duncan Jones 1985, Burton 1990, 438). This would imply that a town could dispose of land to be destined for private and public use. In ancient disputes concerning the definition of property-boundaries, the adjective 'public' is often used with reference to land which could not come under private control (i.e. meadows, pasture, *etc.*). Only the local authorities could dispose of it to grow timber for fuel to heat public bath-houses, for instance, or to create execution areas or cemeteries for the 'poor' (Frontinus, *De Controversiis* [Dilke 1971, 107 ff.]).

As Rodwell has suggested with reference to what he called 'town-zones' (above), the extent of 'urban property' is bound to have varied according to the size and status of the settlement.

If one assumes that a town could dispose of land, there is no reason to believe that the areas destined for burial use, unless privately owned, were under a different form of regulation.

There is evidence from the Continent for the existence of private burial grounds generally related to reasonably well to do people who could afford to buy a piece of land to be used as the family burial plot (Toynbee 1971, Ch. IV) (3). Furthermore, strips of land along the main roads often belonged to a city and the council could grant burial lots here to citizens who had rendered valuable public services (Liversidge 1973, 490).

Above all, as the evidence seems to suggest (Chs. II and III), the cemeteries were part of the general scheme of development involving the suburbs and therefore likely to have been publicly regulated. This seems to apply at least to those towns which exerted some administrative role.

Uncertainty rests over the status of the burial grounds associated with those minor urban centres from which evidence of official planning or other intervention is ephemeral. With particular reference to the cemeteries, it has been argued that during the IV century burial could take place in a less formal way, as at Ilchester (by then a possible *Civitas Capital* !) and Ashton (see Ch. III) (4) where inhumations had been interred in former plots at the rear of houses along the street frontage. At both sites, pre-existing boundaries may have been re-employed to mark privately owned (or purchased) plots without necessarily implying that the burial grounds as a whole represented private properties.

If the information for the IV century is controversial, the evidence for the earlier period is even more conjectural. For instance, based on general observations such as the small size of the burial grounds and/or the degree of internal organisation, it has been suggested that the cemeteries at Kelvedon (Rodwell 1987) and Skeleton Green (Braughing) (Partridge 1981) may have been private. The former would have represented a family cemetery, the latter the burial ground for a certain stratum of the society. However, as seen in chapter II, from the analysis of the earlier cemeteries, it would appear that there were no features exclusively characteristic of the small, as opposed to the large, towns. A direct connection between the size/status of the cemeteries and the size/status of the parent settlements may have applied to some sites, without having to stretch the evidence and conclude that all the burial grounds outside the minor towns were private and, by contrast, those outside the major urban towns communal. Nonetheless, based

on the interpretation of the legal terms from the ancient sources (above), it is possible that smaller centres enjoyed a higher degree of freedom or that the respective authorities did not take any particular interest in matters of land regulation, especially during the early centuries.

A town may have also owned a portion of the surrounding countryside as part of its 'territory'. It is known, for example, that disputes between communities over the ownership of land had to be dealt with by the provincial governor (Burton 1990, 438) and that these disputes could affect either the town or the countryside (Frontinus, *ibid.*).

Although uncertainty rests upon the definition of the town edge, boundary ditches appear to have been a common feature of the landscape, reflecting on the use and ownership of land. Boundaries associated with earlier field-systems often predated the creation of the cemeteries suggesting that parcels of land may have been privately owned (Burnham & Wachter 1990, 121). Only at Dorchester on Thames (Queensford Farm and Church Piece) with the possible addition of Ilchester (Northover cemetery) and the Crown Building site at Dorchester (Dorset) is there conclusive evidence for cemetery enclosures being specifically dug to bound the graves. In the particular case of Dorchester on Thames, the location of the cemeteries at a considerable distance from the Roman town to serve the needs of the rural population may have rendered the presence of boundaries necessary in order to prevent burial from spreading into the neighbouring property.

Irrespective of whether former boundaries were re-employed or new ones purposely created to enclose a burial ground, the location of the cemeteries in formerly occupied areas would point to management of both the periphery and the territory surrounding a urban centre. Not only did a town exert control on public land; it may have also disposed of former private property, as at Ilchester and Ashton for instance, by dictating changes in use and ownership.

#### IV.2.iii INTERNAL REGULATION OF THE BURIAL AREAS

The apparent order within the Romano-British cemeteries suggests some form of control over their use and that the cemeteries developed according to a pre-arranged plan. Therefore, not only designating an area for burial (i.e. location), but also the internal arrangement of the graves and the allocation of space within the cemetery may have been subjected to a form of civic regulation. It is,

however, difficult to uncover whether cemetery organisation related to patterns of land ownership, funerary corporations (*collegia funeraticia*), religious beliefs, centralised administration or, as it is more reasonable to believe, to more than one single factor at the same time.

A town had limited powers in matters concerning planning or official building activity which may have involved additional expenditure from the civic funds. However, there is evidence, especially from epigraphic sources, that maintenance lay within the competence of the local magistrates who were also responsible for a wide range of civic services such as water supply and road repair. Many municipal duties were sometimes levied in the form of services as *corvees* which were provided free (Salway 1985, *passim*). Given that the local authorities were concerned with matters of hygiene and general maintenance of the public facilities (below), it seems reasonable to argue that the town also exerted control over the cemeteries. Furthermore, the cemeteries were located along access roads. Therefore, a form of civic pride or dignity may have played a part in the careful disposal of the bodies which, following the diffusion of inhumation as the main burial practice, had become an even more 'cumbersome' matter of concern for a town. Control over the cemeteries must have become a problem when inhumation developed into the dominant mode of burial: hygienic factors had necessarily to be taken into consideration to avoid the spread of diseases or, more simply, to prevent uncovering or exposing and therefore violating a decomposed body, even if by simple accident. From this point of view, the internal lay-out of the cemeteries, the depth of the grave cut, the placing of the body in coffins, plastering or packing can be seen not only as a form of concern and respect for the mortal remains of the departed, whatever the religious beliefs of the dead and his/her family may have been, but also as part of the measures to prevent upsetting or disturbing the living.

If one assumes that a town exerted control over use of land within the settlement, whether holding or simply disposing of it and, as a consequence, that the land given over for burial use was publicly regulated, it is also possible that internal plots were sold, rented or subjected to some other form of regulation. Epigraphic sources from the Continent indicate that purchase and sale of burial plots or space in large tombs was a fairly common phenomenon (5). Land for graves could be obtained from municipalities, imperial estates or private owners (Liversidge 1976, 220).

With regards to Britain, there is no direct evidence for deeds of sale or other forms of transaction. The only available example referring to ownership of a tomb and the land on which it was sited is represented by a fragmentary inscription from a Chester tombstone. This reads '... he lies here buried in his own ground'



(RIB 55, Liversidge 1973, 490). However, at Butt Road (Colchester) large pits dug and then backfilled with loose soil have been recorded and interpreted either as family plots for relatives to be buried in adjacent graves, or as a form of "booking" the location of a grave by digging a double/triple sized pit and mounding up the backfill to mark the spot (Crummy 1993). This would indicate that some control was exercised over the cemeteries although uncertainty rests upon more specific aspects of legal regulation. In more general terms, when considering the evidence for the presence of family groups, it seems difficult not to accept that burial plots were subjected to some form of management. It is known that a tomb or a burial site was retained by the family in perpetuity by a permanent prohibition against alienation (Lewis & Reinhold 1966, 282): this would imply that, unless burial plots were purchased or rented, the members of a family could not have dictated where their bodies were to be buried.

#### IV.2.iv MANAGEMENT COMPETENCE

Whether management of the cemeteries lay within the competence of the local magistrates or a body of specialists acting under the supervision of these magistrates cannot be proved for certain. *En passant*, it is interesting to notice that even those charters which provide detailed descriptions of the functions of particular magistracies do not contain any reference to the cemeteries. For example, it is known that the *aediles* of the *municipium* at Irni (Spain) were in charge of maintaining and repairing the public buildings (bath houses, temples, etc.), the sewers, the drains and the roads. They also supervised the corn supply and some religious events, inspected weights and measures, and organised the watch (6).

The literary evidence also suggests that specialists were employed by the civic magistrates in their capacity to deal with agricultural, architectural and military aspects and for the provision of urban services (drains, efficient sewage systems, disposal of rubbish, *etc.*) not dissimilar to those which were under the supervision of the *aediles* mentioned above. These specialists appear to have been available in most provinces, their activity being subjected to central control (Dilke 1985, 6-13, *passim*).

With reference to the cemeteries, it is reasonable to think that technicians may have been employed for no other reason than to evaluate the morphology and, thus suitability or rural/industrial potentiality, of the portion of land to be employed for burial.

The IV century witnessed the rise in importance of the technical culture; in the context of the rigidly structured form of Empire inaugurated by Diocletian technicians seem to have had roles which were becoming gradually important, whether or not in the context of the new system of taxation, for the functioning of the complex State apparatus. During the Late Empire schools were instituted for the formation of *agrimensores*, architects and military experts who were progressively absorbed by the bureaucratic system. The *Corpus Agrimensorum* gives an idea of the importance of surveyors who were trained in subjects such as astronomy, geometry, techniques of levelling, orientation, triangulation, soil analysis, mapping etc. At some stage the *agrimensores* started to act as judges in some land disputes (Dilke 1985), including those over the definition of boundaries between properties on which *monumenta* (i.e. monuments and/or tombs) were sited (Anon., *De Sepulchris* [Blume *et al.* 1848]). Without implying that surveyors were in charge of cemetery planning or, in more general terms, of urban/sub-urban development, when considering both the growing importance given to various bodies of specialists and the increasing degree of internal uniformity displayed by the burial grounds, the hypothesis of the existence of a body of specialists for the supervision of the cemeteries and associated land-disputes, especially in the late period, is not entirely groundless.

At the lowest level there are indications within the written sources that simple *ustores* and *fossores* carried out the unpleasant task of cremating or interring the corpses. It is however unknown whether these were permanently and publicly employed or privately hired.

In a few exceptional cases of well to do people who could afford to buy a plot and erect monumental tombs, provisions were made in the will for the supervision of the burial sites. The wills could contain detailed directions ranging from the construction of the monuments to the organisation of funerary and commemorative rituals, as in the II century document from Langres in France (Liversidge 1973, 491). More memorably, Petronius in the *Satyricon* (I century) provides a parody of the will of the fictional character Trimalchio, a parvenu *libertus* of his times.

#### IV.2.v CONCLUSIONS

From the few examples analysed in chapters II and III, it would appear that the kind of internal organisation displayed by both cremation and inhumation cemeteries varied from site to site, with a tendency towards uniformity becoming particular apparent in the course of the IV century. It has been argued that the

degree of cemetery organisation may have reflected settlement ranking, the careful disposal of the dead in large communal cemeteries being a useful indicator of more complex communities where the authorities would have taken a more direct interest in matters of burial management (Esmonde Cleary 1987, 174-176, *passim*; Burnham & Wachter 1990, 323). Alternatively, with reference to the late Roman period, it has been suggested that burial within suburban plots mirrored decline in the standards within a contracting settlement (Burnham & Wachter 1990, 31, 316).

However, there is no evidence for a direct link between settlement status and degree of cemetery organisation nor for a connection between standard of burial and urban decline. The majority of minor sites analysed above, with particular reference to the later period, show evidence for extensive organised inhumation cemeteries. For example, at Ashton burials have been found scattered at the rear of private plots but also orderly arranged in a formal extensive cemetery. A similar situation seems to apply to Ilchester where the Northover cemetery displays a character of internal organisation in contrast with less formal burials in the plots located to the south of the town. Another enlightening example is provided by Cirencester and York: the absence of apparent order among the burials at Bath Gate and Trentholme Drive respectively can be taken as further evidence that settlement ranking did not necessarily reflect on the internal organisation of the cemeteries. When considering the status of the two centres as provincial capitals, it is hard to believe that the apparent lack of cemetery management was the result of lack of intervention by the 'authority'.

The same considerations apply to the location of the cemeteries. The choice of land for burial does not show any particular pattern which may be related to settlement hierarchy. Areas previously used for industrial or rural activity could be equally given over for burial in the context of both major and minor towns during the later and earlier period. In general the evidence would suggest that, with a few possible exceptions (i.e. some minor centres in the early period), the suburbs and the cemeteries of small and large towns were subjected to a very similar kind of development and regulation.

It is only in the advanced IV-V century that burial organisation started to become relaxed and many cemeteries ceased to be in use possibly as the result of urban contraction. The town of Winchester provides a significant example with the breaking down of the internal layout in the cemetery at Lankhills and with the shift of some of the later burials to the congested area at Victoria Road (See Ch. III).

### IV.3 THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH (Brief Remarks)

So far, the word management has been used with a 'secular' connotation implying the intervention of a civic authority in burial matters. In the present section an attempt has been made to analyse the positive and negative evidence for a potential active presence of the Church authority behind the management of the late Romano-British cemeteries as a whole or part of them. A brief synthesis of the rise and diffusion of Christianity in Roman-Britain was given in Chapter I. This is not the place to enter into specific debates currently taking place on the dating and interpretation of the evidence for the identification of churches and specific rituals nor to discuss the criteria for the definition of Christian and pagan traits in the late Romano-British burial practices. Such topics are outside the specific aim of the present work.

Limitations to the discussion are posed by the paucity and controversial character of both historical and archaeological sources for the analysis of the diffusion of Christianity in Roman Britain, and by the problem of combining material evidence and textual information which, in most cases, cannot come to grips with their mutual relationship.

Christianity appears to have remained a minor religion. Furthermore, in absence of specifically Christian symbolism and inscriptions, it is difficult to distinguish features specific to Christian rituals from the general trends displayed by the late Romano-British burial practices (see Ch. III). Prevalently unfurnished and confined inhumations laid out in rows and lines within regular bounds, mainly on a west-east orientation, are not univocal indicators of Christianity. By the IV century the funerary customs conformed to a fashion which spread from the core of the Empire. Some of the new burial trends may have been embraced by Christianity itself or anyone who simply wanted to adopt the tradition in vogue at the time or, following the adoption of Christianity as the religion of the Emperor Constantine, conform to the mainstream for political interest. However, it cannot be doubted that Christianity helped to reinforce aspects of the new funerary custom, also accounting for the widespread distribution and long lasting duration of it.

That the towns were responsible for the maintenance of public temples and related official religious ceremonial practices under the supervision of the priests is all too well known; epigraphic material suggests that Roman Britain also conformed to the general trend (Salway 1985, 580). However, as on the Continent, a dichotomy between cemeteries and religious buildings as exclusive places for, respectively, the celebration of private funerary rituals and

congregation, seems to have occurred, at least prior to the diffusion of Christianity. Priests, whatever their rank and functions may have been, do not appear to have been directly involved in matters of burial management or funerary cults, apart from public official ceremonies involving the imperial family. With the diffusion of Christianity, the appearance of *martyria*, in addition to the rare cases of burial within churches, would suggest that this dichotomy was weakening. In other words, the perception of the space for the dead in the collective imagery was changing with the transformation of the Christian cemeteries in light of the intense and frequent visiting by the living, especially in the case of martyr cults. As a result, the spread of Christianity between the III and the IV century was responsible for the change from family commemoration to public cult. There is evidence from the Continent that, at some stage, funerary ceremonies were even organised by bishops in order to channel religious fervour (Perinetti 1989).

The Christian cemeteries in Rome seem to have originated in private burial plots of rich influential families which had been converted at an early stage and, as patrons, had provided meeting places and burial facilities for the community. Although the rich patrons first owned and controlled the cemeteries, the Church soon took over, often acquiring the burial grounds by gift and then regulating their use and development. By the III century the Church had thus begun to acquire property. At first the religious authorities owned only their places of worship and burial grounds. From Constantine onwards their property grew rapidly. The Emperor himself set the example by munificent donations of land and houses to the Church of Rome and in 321 AD by expressly legalised bequests. As Christianity spread to the wealthier classes, gifts and bequests became more substantial and frequent.

On the basis of recent research, mainly conducted in the Mediterranean area, it has been suggested that a hierarchy may have been responsible for establishing the location of the cemeteries (Perinetti 1989). It would appear that the Church also employed its own grave-diggers, although uncertainty rests upon their employment status (7).

For Britain there is no evidence for a direct involvement of the Church in the management of the cemeteries. Even at Poundbury (Dorchester), Butt Road (Colchester) and Ashton which are among the most organised burial areas in late Roman Britain, and among the best candidates for a reasonably convincing argument to be made on their Christian nature, there are insufficient grounds for surmising the control of a religious authority. At Poundbury general internal

features appear in association with inscriptions (8), mausolea and evidence for different burial rites being practised simultaneously in different areas of the site. Inscriptions (9), enclosed groups of graves and evidence for different burial rites have been identified at Lankhills. At Ashton evidence has emerged for two cemeteries being in use at the same time and displaying different burial rites; in addition to this, two lead tanks with a Chi-Ro monogram dating to the IV century and possibly related to Christian ritual have been recovered from the site. At Colchester (Butt Road) symbols on a lead coffin (10), mausolea and plaster burials have been interpreted as potential indicators of Christianity. Furthermore, the location of a possible church on the site of the cemetery and the existence of an intramural building with a basilical shape (Colch. 9) which may have represented a martyrial church due to the presence of an exceptional burial inside (Crummy 1980, 265-266), reinforce the argument of Butt Road being a Christian cemetery. An apsidal building (Ver. 7) located in the proximity of the cemetery has also been recorded at Verulam Hills Field, together with mausolea. At Camington, apart from general trends such as west-east orientation, layout of the burials in rows, *etc.* only the presence of focal graves indicates a possible Christian use of the cemetery.

It has been suggested that the Christians may have set aside burial plots for their own use (Green 1977, 46). As seen in Chapter III, there are instances of two or more cemeteries being concurrently in use but displaying different (i.e. 'Christian' *versus* 'non-Christian') burial rites. However, with regards to Roman Britain, there is no conclusive evidence that Christians were buried outside the communal urban cemeteries in their own burial grounds.

Another potential indicator for the involvement of the Church in burial matters would be provided by the existence of the so-called cemetery-churches. Unfortunately, with reference to Roman Britain, there are difficulties in recognising not only this particular kind of building, but Christian churches in general. At Colchester (Butt Road) (Crummy 1980, 264-65), Verulamium-St. Albans (Verulam Hills Field) (Anthony 1968) and possibly Icklingham (Thomas 1981, 217-18) the cemeteries have provided evidence for apsidal buildings which may have represented churches. At present, there are only a few additional buildings where a fairly convincing suggestion can be made for their Christian nature (11). In general, sites with evidence for Christian burials has failed to provide evidence for churches and *viceversa*.

To conclude, on the basis of the available evidence it would appear that a high percentage of late Romano-British cemeteries were still pagan and probably subjected to a pre-existing form of management and that the Church did not have enough power or interest in matters of burial. A process of change in cemetery management from civil to ecclesiastical may have occurred elsewhere on the Continent, when Christianity was given an official character following its adoption as the religion of the Emperor Constantine, with a new form of authority simply succeeding a previous one. With regards to Britain what have been interpreted as Christian cemeteries may have simply started as conventional orderly urban burial grounds which became Christian in the sense that at some stage adherents of the new faith became numerically superior. This may apply to Butt Road where the cemetery shows evidence for a sudden change from north-south to east-west orientation of the burials, in concomitance with the construction of a church at the edge of the cemetery. However, the evidence is still insufficient to allow conclusions to be drawn over a change in management. This reinforces the view that the nature of the so-called Christian cemeteries can be at best defined as being predominantly, rather than exclusively, Christian. Even so, the examples of the well known sites at Poundbury and Butt Road are themselves significantly conclusive in attesting the existence within the local communities of influential Christians who found a means of expressing their beliefs in accordance with the mainstream of burial fashion.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

(1) Some examples of enforcement of this law are provided by Harries (1985, 56-67): see Caesar's regulation for Urso (Osuna in Spain), according to which burial whether by means of cremation or inhumation had to occur outside the built-up area. Furthermore, the construction of crematoria was forbidden within half a mile of the town 'limits'. See also Justinian's Digest about the Emperor Hadrian's sanction that intramural burial would incur a fine. Even carrying a corpse through a town required a permission from the 'proper' authority (Marcus Aurelius). On the subject, see also Lewis & Reinhold (1966, *passim*).

(2) Examples of laws about violation are provided by Julianus Jurist, *Dig.* 47 12.6 and Pomponius, *Dis* 47 12.5 (Harries 1985, 56-67). General disinclination to disturb earlier burials seems to have also applied to the cemeteries after they had ceased to be in use, although exceptions have been recorded (Esmonde Cleary 1987, 193). See also Reece (1977b) on the letter describing Sidonius Apollinaris's reaction to the disturbance of a family grave by diggers during the V century.

(3) Examples are known from Rome where the tombs along the Via Appia were regarded as public monuments.

(4) On the interpretation of the plots at Ilchester as possible private burial grounds see Finch Smith 1987, 115-116; as Finch Smith recognises, uncertainty rests upon the relationship between the last building phase and the cemetery (Leach 1982, 11, 84); thus, it is not possible to establish whether continuity or change occurred in the use of the parcel of land where the late inhumation cemetery developed.

(5) Sale of burial places in collective tombs is recorded in CIL VI, 4884; 4902; 4940; 5014 a. Space was also bought and sold in the Christian catacombs (Hopkins 1983, 212 note 16).

(6) On the *Lex Irmitanasee* Gonzales 1986.

(7) In the early III century the catacomb of St. Callistus in Rome was established under the control of the Church. In Africa records of the persecution by Diocletian at Circa mention *fossores*; a term first found in Late Latin inscriptions to denote catacomb diggers (CIL V, 7543); the grave diggers recorded in Africa may have been employed in a cemetery administered by the Church. (Toynbee 1971, 43 ff.; Green 1977, 46).

(8) The inscription on a coffin-lining I(N) N(OMINE TUO) D(OMI)NE is open to other plausible interpretations; however, the presence of a 'Y' shaped object as Christian symbol from a second grave would support the evidence of the former as being Christian.



(9) A monogram *iota-chi=ich*[thus] on a container and a stylised fish have been recorded from Feature 6 (F. 6) at Lankhills.

(10) The sides of a coffin were decorated with a cross and a circle device, 'S' motifs circles on pecten shells associated with Christian symbolism.

(11) See Ch. I note 20.

# CHAPTER V

## THE RURAL CEMETERIES

(A Brief Assessment of the Evidence  
with Particular Reference to Late Roman Britain)

### V.1 INTRODUCTION

This is not the place for an in-depth investigation of the evidence from the rural cemeteries, the analysis of which remains outside the main objective of the present work. However, when considering that the bulk of the population lived and therefore died in the countryside, the high potentiality offered by this class of sites to the overall phenomenon of burial cannot be ignored.

It is only in recent times following the occurrence of extensive excavations of rural settlements and associated burials that archaeologists have become aware of the need to employ new interpretative parameters and change the kind of research questions. Regional surveys have been conducted with emphasis on economic aspects to be integrated in the analysis of the network of social relationships within and between sites (see for example Hallam 1970; Branigan 1977a; Miles 1988; Hingley 1984 and 1989).

Superficially, the distinctive *facies* of the Roman town was represented by the exercise of economic, political and social functions which could create the premise for the dictates of a life-style, the flow of innovations being more likely to occur in the urban centres. These very aspects form a plausible scenario for the role of the Romano-British towns as centres of innovation in burial practices through the introduction and spread of fashionable trends related to body treatment and furnishing within specific chronological frameworks and geographical boundaries.

It is not always easy to differentiate between urban and rural sites, especially in the absence of conclusive evidence for the performance of specific administrative functions at the former. However, the dichotomy between town and country (i.e. *negotium versus otium*) was perceived by the Romans themselves, the perception of the two contexts being the result of the respective balance of social, political and economic functions. Broadly speaking, these functions were regulated by bureaucratic control in the towns and by kinship and custom based relationships in

the country. Kinship and custom based relationships are likely to have played a major role in matters of burial. For example, there is no evidence that the rural cemeteries were subjected to external (civic) control, their organisation being probably supervised by the occupants of the rural settlements and influenced by social and economic factors. Thus the first criterion for the differentiation of rural and urban sites could be represented, at least in legal theory, by the absence, at the former, of official laws concerning the disposal of the dead and, implicitly, by the absence of external restrictions over the layout and the organisation of the cemeteries. The problem is to determine whether striking differences emerge in funerary practices or in the internal layout of the burial grounds and whether these differences alone can stand out as a *discrimen* factor for the identification of rural versus urban centres. In other words, are there distinctive features as displayed by the urban and rural sites and, if so, could the performance of burial practices alone provide a useful indication for the definition of the two types of settlements?

The task is fraught with difficulty for the evidence from the countryside on the whole is poor and difficult to interpret, especially in the context of the early period of Roman occupation. Moreover, uncertainty rests over the definition of individual sites and related functions, over the conceptual distinction between dispersed and nucleated settlements and, finally, with regards to the latter, over the boundary between rural nucleated sites and minor towns ( Todd 1988, 17-19).

The complexity of the Romano-British landscape as a polyhedral and dynamic phenomenon emphasises the general inadequacy of the archaeological investigation. The danger of pitfalls becomes even more apparent when trying to achieve a definition of the rural sites by the introduction of too rigid means of classification. It is often difficult (and more often inappropriate) to draw a neat dividing line between the two major types of settlements, i.e. villas and farmsteads, as uncertainty rests upon the definition of a series of apparently intermediate case studies and related social and economic changes. The Romano-British landscape comprises categories 'in a divisible... but still continuous scale of settlement size and nucleation' (Dark & Dark 1997, 54). These categories consist of farms, villas, villages and some small towns and roadside settlements alike. However, for the aim of the present analysis, the traditional distinction between villa and non-villa (or farmstead) sites has been adopted. This is based on, respectively, the presence or the absence of specific attributes which derive from the assimilation of 'imported' aesthetic ideas within the process of Romanisation - i.e. type of building-plan, degree of architectural sophistication in the form of mosaics, painted plaster, sculpture work and architectural details, presence of facilities such as bath-complexes and hypocaust-

systems, etc. (Branigan 1977a; Frere 1991, 259) - and related social, cultural as well as economic implications.

## V.2 BURIALS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE: THE NATURE OF THE EVIDENCE

There is a widespread belief that each rural establishment, or at least each villa, must have had its own burial area (Webster 1969, 233), as some sites on the Continent would suggest (Jones 1975). However, little evidence is available for Roman Britain, the number of known rural cemeteries (in association with villas, farmsteads or temples) being very small, especially in comparison with the situation for the urban centres. This implies that, at present, it is not possible to configure a model for the normative burial of the country population. It is uncertain whether it was customary to bring the dead to town or bury them on discrete grounds in rural locations (and, if so, in relation to what type of settlement), always assuming that the burials were given a formal treatment.

In order to address the matter, the evidence from the distribution of the rural cemeteries, although still ephemeral and uncertain, has to be reviewed in the light of the phenomenon of population density and, in particular, in relation to the problem of urban contraction during the IV century. In the tradition of the historical studies there has been a great upsurge of interest towards the debate over the nature and quality of urban life in Roman Britain during the late Empire. As seen in Chapter I, both the hypotheses of urban decline and unchanged continuity have been challenged and reformulated. Accordingly, in late Roman Britain both 'major' and 'minor' towns were still poles of administrative and economic functions and decline did not occur prior to the end of the IV century, the bulk of the evidence for abandonment (and non replacement) of buildings and general deterioration in standards dating to the last quarter of the IV century.

The evidence from the suburbs and, in more specific terms, the cemeteries point in the same direction: for the IV century there is no indication that a marked recession in activity took place within contracting settlements. Settlement decline would imply settlement contraction, that is a contraction in the size of the population whereas the rate of suburban occupation and the extensive character of the late Romano-British cemeteries, many of which were laid out *ex novo* during the IV century, suggest that there was still a considerable population living in town (Esmonde Cleary 1987). Moreover, decline in urban standards would also reflect on the nature of the burial areas for which there is indication of management. Alternatively, it has been argued that the major towns may have been looked on by the *civitas* as significant social and religious *foci* without necessarily implying that they remained major population centres (Millett 1990, 142). If one accepts that the towns were 'depopulated', i.e. by rejecting the proposed evidence for occupation as insignificant from a quantitative point of view, to justify the extension of the urban

cemeteries in the IV century it has to be assumed that, at some stage, the rural population started to bring their dead to the towns for burial. However, there is a strand of evidence which renders this argument difficult to accept.

As seen above (Ch. III), at Dorchester on Thames (which cannot be regarded as a major town *stricto sensu*, despite evidence showing that the centre exerted some administrative function) the cemeteries may have served a wider catchment area. Far from being conclusive, the evidence for Dorchester on Thames is, at present, *sui generis*, without proving for certain that the urban cemeteries in late Roman Britain were increasingly used by the rural population.

Furthermore, it has been observed that the cemetery at Poundbury (Dorchester) does not display an urban character. In particular, the evidence from the skeletal analysis conducted on the buried population with instances of fractures related to agricultural activities and, *viceversa*, lack of stress injuries associated with intensive labour of more specific urban occupations, indicates the presence of an agrarian society. The site at Poundbury may have been sustained by an agrarian economy. Nonetheless it displays the population density (estimated just below 2000 individuals) and social organisation of a town with indications of medical practices and relatively small sized family *nuclei* (Molleson 1995). These observations do not necessarily indicate the presence of a rural population but of a population (or at least a high percentage of it) involved in rural activities, and would conform with the growing evidence for both farming in town and farming from the town (Boon 1957, 178; Wachter 1978, 274, 372, 388; Salway 1985, 586-7; Esmonde Cleary 1987; Niblett 1994, 86).

Beside the negative or, at least, controversial evidence from the urban centres, the positive evidence from the countryside, however poor and misrepresentative it may be, stands out against the model of burial in town as customary for the rural population. The chronological distribution of the known cemeteries does not point to changing patterns: in other terms, there is no indication that the location of the burials shifted progressively from the country to the town. On the contrary, in comparison with the situation for the early cemeteries, the evidence suggests the presence of a growing number of small and medium size cemeteries in rural contexts which are dated to the late Roman period. The available sample may simply reflect a greater amount of archaeological investigation with fortuitous chance playing a major role in the rate of discovery. Therefore, it has to be born in mind that isolated groups of burials (especially cremations) and some isolated graves in rural location could signal the existence of larger cemeteries around them. Nonetheless the situation for the IV century is significant in its own right and raises two main points of interest. Burial in town did not represent the norm for the rural areas. Indirectly, this observation strengthens the evidence from the late urban

cemeteries to argue for the presence of a substantial population still living in the towns.

Furthermore, the widespread diffusion of features which did not remain the exclusive prerogative of the urban centres shows that the towns exerted a strong influence on the rural communities. Yet, some funerary rites travelled from country to town especially in the course of the IV century (1), implying that by the IV century the rural areas had become 'sufficiently habituated to formal burial to have come up with their own variants' (Esmonde Cleary 1995, 35). This is not surprising since the countryside acted as a source of population and thus of ideas for the towns: as some of the people who had moved from the country to the town died and were buried in urban cemeteries, new ideas were introduced to the urban milieu.

## V.3 WHO WAS BURIED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE?

### V.3.i THE VILLA-SITES

Burial was made in a variety of grave types which, to some extent, may indicate the importance or wealth of the deceased. With reference to the rural areas, as the Roman villa itself embedded a form of social and economic significance, the villa is the most likely place to look for wealth and status.

To date, villa sites have provided little evidence for the existence of cemeteries (being in use when the villa complexes were occupied). Furthermore, monumental forms of burial in (temple-) mausolea or particularly elaborate forms of body containers appear to have been relatively rare.

#### MAUSOLEA

There is only a handful of mausolea, generally short-lived structures, which have been found on villa estates. Their construction or abandonment appears to have been related to phases of reoccupation and major refurbishing of the villa complexes in the course of the first half of the IV century, sometimes following a short period of dereliction. For example the temple-mausoleum at Lullingstone (Kent) (Meates 1979) is dated to AD 300. By the late IV century it had gone out of use. In contrast at Bancroft (Bucks.) (Williams & Zeevat 1994) the mausoleum dated to the second half of the II century fell into disrepair by the end of the III-early IV century and was subsequently stripped down to obtain material for the packing of later burials (late IV-V? century), possibly associated with a circular mausoleum-shrine. In both cases, the chronology for the construction and abandonment of the mausolea respectively appears to match that for the reoccupation of the sites and the extension of the villa-buildings. It would also suggest an increase in the status of the occupants as at Lullingstone or a possible change in ownership as at Bancroft. A similar situation may also apply to Arbury (Cambs.) (Alexander *et al.* 1969) and Keston (Kent) (Philp 1969), although at the latter site burials especially in the form of cremation may have started earlier than the IV century. At the rural site (a villa ?) at Normangate (Water Newton, Cambs.) located on a former industrial area later reverted to agriculture, a phase of major refurbishing during the IV century culminated in the construction of a mausoleum (Dannell & Wild 1969; 1971; 1974). Mausolea on villa estates often took the form of temples or were associated with shrines, as at Lullingstone and Bancroft [and probably Stone by Faversham (Kent) (Fletcher & Meates 1969; 1977) and Harpenden (Herts.) (Lowther 1937)] where 'the attention paid to the person buried suggests a hero or aristocratic ancestorship



rather than the cult of the more ordinary dead' (Lewis 1966, 6). If true, this observation acquires particular significance in the context of sites such as Lullingstone and Bancroft where the chronological evidence seems to point to a change in ownership or, in any case, reoccupation of temporarily abandoned villa-complexes, with the mausolea being erected as foci of special significance, possibly to (re-)consolidate land-rights, or being demolished to obliterate any traces of the previous occupants.

Mausolea associated with villas are recorded from the II century throughout the whole of the Roman period as a feature which seems to have characterised the rural gentry according to the Roman tradition. The idea of the mausoleum itself however was not entirely new, for 'mausolea-like' structures made from timber seem to have been in use in South-East England before as well as during the period of Roman occupation (See Chs. II & III). Following the advent of the army, the early masonry mausolea were probably associated with the burial of dignitaries from the Continent and were progressively adopted by what was going to become the local rural gentry. Besides the example at Bancroft, earlier mausolea dated to the II-early III century have been found at Roman Farm, Pitney (Somerset) (Leech 1980) and in Hertfordshire at Dicket Mead (Rook *et al.* 1984) and Wood Lane End (Hemel Hempstead), the latter being part of a major ritual complex, possibly associated with the villa at Gorhambury, near Verulamium (Neal 1984). The complex at Wood Lane End and the mausoleum at Dicket Mead appear to have been abandoned sometime during the course of the III and IV century respectively probably undergoing the same fate as their 'associated' villas (2). Throughout the III century political instability led to a series of Gallic usurpers whose domain included Britain. The collapse of confidence and debasement of coinage may have created a fluctuation in the economy causing the definitive or temporary abandonment of a number of rural sites (Branigan 1977a). Notwithstanding difficulties in establishing chronological relationships, in many instances the (re-)construction of the mausolea appears to have been associated with the occupational phases of the associated villas. This would show that mere chance was not alone responsible for the foundation of substantial burial structures on the estates.

## CEMETERIES

Throughout the whole of the Roman period, burials on villa estates appear to have been rare. It is therefore difficult to uncover conclusive patterns and establish relationships between earlier and later interments and mausolea. At present, what can be observed is that in the majority of cases the few examples of burials, whether located in formal cemeteries or disposed of in buildings, pits or ditches,

belonged to infants (3). For instance at Barton Court (above), Winterton (Lincs.) (Stead 1976), Rudston (Humber.) (Stead 1980), Dalton Parlour (Yorks.) (Wrathmell & Nicholson 1990) and Hambleton (Bucks.) (Cocks 1921) adults were virtually absent. Beside the occasional instances of re-burials and haphazard interments, there is only a handful of formal (and, generally, discrete) cemeteries for adults as at Ipswich (Suff.) (Moir & Maynard 1933), Chignall St. James (Essex) (Rankov 1982) and Stanwick (Northants.) (Neal 1987). It has been suggested that the cemetery at Ipswich was employed for the interment of people of "small social importance" whereas the owners of the villa were probably taken elsewhere for burial (Moir & Maynard 1933). At Stanwick burials of infants were also recorded. Stanwick is a particularly interesting site as it displays evidence for a nucleated settlement (or 'village') attached to it, conforming to a situation which has been observed for a number of other villas in the Nene Valley (Branigan 1985, 135-40).

The last examples mentioned above raise a question of major significance, namely whose standard of living was reflected in the material remains recovered from the cemeteries in association with the villa-estates. In particular, when dealing with the end of the IV century (and beyond) the analysis of the evidence is fraught with uncertainty. It is often difficult to establish whether the villa buildings were still in use by the time burial took place, and, if so, to what extent. There are frequent examples of villa sites being employed for later burials (Percival 1976, 183) (4). However, in a discussion of the evidence from the so-called 'sub-Roman' cemeteries Rahtz (1977) has warned of the danger of assuming a direct occupational link between villas and burial grounds. For instance, sites such as Welton Wold (Yorks.), Eccles (Kent) and Wint Hill (Som.) represent cases of dubious association: it is uncertain as to whether the cemeteries were contemporary with the parent settlements. Similarly, the three possible Christian burials at Gatcombe may or may not have belonged to the last inhabitants of the Romano-British villa; in absence of firm means of dating, chronological relationships remain hypothetical (Branigan 1977b). At Bancroft the later burials near the villa-complex may have been Christian (Watts 1991, 229). The fact that the pagan mausoleum was neglected (if not probably robbed to acquire material for the packing of the later, supposedly Christian, graves) suggests that the term 'continuity' has to be used with caution. The conclusion to be drawn from the settlement and cemetery continuity emphasises the danger of assuming any simple equation between a single community, a settlement site and the cemetery. A cemetery need not have served a single rural community and a community may have been dispersed among a number of settlement sites. Nor can it be assumed that the factors governing the use and abandonment of a cemetery coincided with those affecting the character,

location and survival of the individual villa-complexes. In Roman Britain there is evidence for the occupation of villa-estates after the dwelling houses were sometimes abandoned implying that the land attached to the estates was still under cultivation. It cannot be excluded therefore that in many instances small late or sub-Roman (?) cemeteries near the villas represented the burial place of bailiffs (and their families) left to run the estates on the behalf of absentee landlords who had probably moved back to the towns due to the upheaval of the times. Some dwellings appear to have been allowed to fall into disrepair and with them, not surprisingly, the mausolea.

As a whole, burial in mausolea or in formal cemeteries associated with villas does not seem to have represented the norm in Roman Britain, even allowing for the limitations from both chance discovery and the differential rate of survival of the archaeological evidence which could provide a distorted picture.

If one accepts that the villa owners were the members of the same local aristocracy which was involved in the administration of the urban centres (Branigan 1977a; Hodder & Millett 1980; Todd 1988), probably owning the more sophisticated town-houses, the fact that burial did not commonly take place on the villa estates may indicate that the towns were regarded as the privileged place for burial whether for personal reasons (e.g. the desire to be buried in conformity with a family tradition) or to express social identity.

During the later I and II century, the tension between town and country in respect of building and burial type appears to have reflected a split in terms of status. The major towns were the favoured arena of civic competition albeit in the form of collective munificence, as attested by the *floruit* of building activity in the public sphere. However, the local elite continued to be buried in rural locations (on their property?), the emphasis being placed on the countryside as the place for social display. It is in rural context, with particular reference to south-east Britain, that more elaborate burials are attested, as in Kent, Hampshire, Hertfordshire and Sussex (Philpott 1991, 218; Millett 1987) (5). There, the cemeteries, essentially small in size, do not appear to have been associated with apparent forms of Romanisation, such as villa-buildings, retaining local characteristics in the lavish display of grave-goods and in the use of body containers. Significantly, rich burials have been found at Colchester and Verulamium (Folly Lane) in the Catuvellauni territory, probably in association with local ruling families (Niblett 1994, 72-4). This would indicate that the process of Romanisation of the native aristocracy had been set in motion in the newly founded *coloniae* and *municipia* failing to have a major resonance in the countryside, at least with reference to some areas of Southern Britain. During the III and IV century the picture changed. It is in the

towns that well-furnished residential houses are attested, their number having increased by then, together with the newly founded cemeteries displaying elaborate burials (See Ch. III). In some instances the phenomenon may have simply represented the continuation of a former trend, as in the case of Colchester and Verulamium. At the same time, fewer wealthy burials appeared in the countryside partly as the result of a general decline in the quantity and categories of furnishing. The phenomenon is even more significant when considering that the shift from the rural to the urban context occurred during the *floruit* of villa buildings, as attested, for example, by the large display of mosaics, bath-complexes and architectural sophistication. It is tempting to see a correlation between the two trends. It may not come as a surprise that the early Romano-British 'farmstead' at Alton (Hamp.), where the cemetery displays evidence for richly furnished graves (Millett 1986), later became the site of a possible villa (with, at present, no evidence for any associated burial ground). Although it is not possible to know for certain whether ownership continued uninterrupted throughout the Roman period, it is tempting to suggest that the native aristocracy came to embrace progressively the Roman style of life (and death) (6). Thus, the changes in the context of burial would have operated within the process of Romanisation in the background of two of the most representative Roman institutions, the villas and the towns, with growing emphasis on expenditure in the private sphere.

### V.3.ii THE EVIDENCE FROM THE FARMSTEADS: OBSERVATIONS

Burial on villa estates would have involved only a minority of people who resided in the countryside, whether on a permanent or temporary basis. Therefore, we still look for the normal burial of the bulk of the Romano-British population. At present, the evidence for the rural dead being customarily interred in the urban cemeteries is not satisfactory (above). The distribution of the known cemeteries would imply that the rural population buried their dead in the countryside.

The analysis of the relationship between the various types of rural sites, namely the so-called farmsteads and the villas, presents some difficulty. As seen in Chapter I, there is evidence that some economic links between the villas and the neighbouring farmsteads (or minor villas) may have existed. However, uncertainty rests upon the social implication of these economic links; similarly, the status of the occupants of the farmsteads remains undetectable. The distribution of the cemeteries may throw further light on aspects of tenurial relationships. If the existence of rural cemeteries in association with the farmsteads has to be regarded in the context of the villa estates, from what has been said above, a *discrimen* between the burial habit of the

villa owners and the remaining rural population becomes apparent. The evidence is still very fragmentary for conclusions to be drawn as the number of known rural cemetery-sites does not account for the whole of the Romano-British population who did not reside in the towns. To complicate the matter, uncertainty rests over the interpretation of the evidence for that class of 'isolated' burials which do not appear to be directly associated with any particular rural settlement. This may simply mean that the sites have not been identified to date, or that these 'isolated' burial grounds were in the orbit of the big villa-estates. The cemetery at Barrow Hill (Atkinson 1952), for example, is coherent with the proximity to (800 m to the north-east) and the chronology of the late Roman villa (late phase: mid III-late IV century) at Barton Court Farm (Oxon.), and may have represented the burial place for the working people (a community of 7 or 8 people) employed on the villa-estates (Miles 1984; 1988, 68). This may account for the lack of adult burials on the villa-site where infants only had been interred in a formal cemetery with sporadic cases of burials in ditches or under the floor of the domestic buildings.

In the majority of the cases, with reference to the cemeteries or isolated burials in rural locations uncertainty rests over the type of associated settlement, as at Bamwood (Glos.) (Clifford 1931) or Bloxham (Oxon.) (Knight 1938). There, concentrations of pottery sherds and animal bones indicate that some kind of rural activity was carried out on the sites, although there was no conclusive evidence for buildings. In other instances the cemeteries appear to have been more certainly associated with contemporary farmsteads or nucleated settlements, as at Lynch Farm (Lincs.) (Jones 1975), Bradley Hill (Som.) (Leech 1981), Curbridge (Oxon.) (Chambers 1976), Ashville (Oxon.) (Parrington 1978) and Catsgore (Som.) (Leech 1982).

#### V.4 EXCURSUS: THE CASE-STUDY OF TWO LATE ROMANO-BRITISH FARMSTEADS

With reference to the last class of sites mentioned above, it is not out of place to provide a detailed synthesis of the evidence from two of the best farmstead cemeteries in late Roman Britain, Bradley Hill (Som.) and Lynch Farm (Cambs.). The presentation of the data in this *excursus* is finalised to provide an example of the quality of modern archaeological investigations. As stated in the introduction of the present chapter, it is only in recent times that attempts have been made to gain an understanding of the complexity inherent in the pattern of rural settlements in Roman Britain. In the specific case of the burial grounds, the two sites selected for the present aim offer examples of interpretational approaches to the analysis of a class of evidence which has been too often neglected or underestimated in the past. Attempts have been made to introduce new lines of enquiries with the awareness that much understanding of social relations can be gained from the 'contextualised' study of the disposal of the dead.

##### Bradley Hill (Leech 1981) (Plate LXI)

##### Location

Bradley Hill is situated *circa* 9 km north-west of Ilchester, to the south of the river Cary. The site was first noted in the early 19th century but located only in 1950 and referred to as a villa. Excavations were conducted between 1968-72 revealing the presence of a late Romano-British farmstead.

Evidence for Pre-Roman Iron Age activity emerged in the form of pits of uncertain interpretation. From negative evidence (i.e. absence of pottery) the site does not appear to have been occupied between the later II century and early IV century.

During the IV century a Romano British farmstead was built. It consisted of two buildings (two or three room-dwellings) and a byre, referred to in the text as respectively B1, B2 and B3. Midden deposits, unconnected walls, gullies and burials were the main features outside the buildings.

From coin evidence the farmstead was established around AD 335-45 and continued to be occupied into the V century. The absence of later pottery indicates that occupation ceased sometime around the middle of the V century. The chronology of the site conforms to the general picture gathered from the neighbouring settlements which are located within the area between the major villa complexes at Pitney to the west and Littleton to the east.

### The burials

Associated with the farmstead were 55 unfurnished burials. All but 6 were approximately west-east oriented and included adults of both sexes (10 males and 10 females), children and infants (*ca.* 35). Four of the six north-south oriented burials belonged to infants. They were found inside B1 (post AD 335-50) and B2 (post AD 365-80) and interpreted as representing either possible foundation burials of religious significance or simple customary burials indoors. The two remaining north-south interments were associated with adults and were located in marginal areas.

The west-east aligned burials were clustered in three separate groups. The first group consisted of 5 graves located inside B3. Some were interpreted as possible re-burials as the skeletons were not complete.

The second group comprised 21 infant inhumations inside B3, probably contemporary with or later than the use of the building as a byre. The graves were well spaced and did not inter-cut each other suggesting that original markers may have been employed. The bodies were placed in stone slab-lined cists.

The third group consisted of 25 burials. They were found south of B3, probably post-dating the construction of the building and representing a shift of the burial area from the west of B2. No enclosing ditches were detected to border the cemetery, although the westernmost grave lay inside the continuation of a boundary wall west of B3. The graves were well spaced and did not disturb each other suggesting the presence of original markers.

All the adult burials of the three groups were placed in slab-lined graves. Grave goods were practically absent, with the exception of rare instances of hobnails and coins on the mouth (or more commonly in the grave-fills).

Detailed examinations of the bones revealed a high number of cranial and skeletal anomalies common to many individuals and best explained as family traits. The evidence suggests that the community was inbred to a considerable extent.

Lynch Farm (Jones 1975)

(Plate LXII)

### Location

Lynch Farm is located in the Nene Valley on drained land, to the north-west of Water Longueville (near Peterborough), approximately 2 km away from the Roman Ermine Street. Some 400 m to the east, in marshy land, a further agricultural site was excavated which has revealed evidence for a Roman fish-pond (Wild 1973). The two sites may have represented independent foci of settlement

(with specialised economic activities related to the different kinds of location) on the estate of one of the villas along the bank of the river Nene.

Excavations at Lynch Farm were conducted in the early seventies in advance of gravel extraction.

Evidence for human activity emerged in the form of ditches and pits dating from the III to the first half of the IV century. In particular, two areas were identified within a ditched enclosure, a courtyard which had been subdivided into plots of uncertain function, and a paddock partially employed for the burial of *ca.* 40 inhumations. The dating evidence seems to suggest one late period of occupation, the only indication of earlier activity being limited to the presence of a Late Iron Age pit which may have belonged to an occupational phase elsewhere in the Lynch Farm area.

Occupation would have come to an end around the middle of the IV century as the result of a gradual decline. A small hoard of (intentionally hidden?) bronze coins was recovered from the fill of the enclosure. The find shows that the boundary ditch was still visible at the end of the IV century, without necessarily implying that the site was still occupied at the time.

#### The burials

In total, 50 adult inhumations and one cremation were recovered during the excavation, the main burial area being located in the south-west corner of the paddock (above). Here, the burials were laid out in four distinct rows, west-east oriented, supine and undisturbed. Exceptions to the organised pattern were represented by four isolated burials on a north-south alignment, a few intrusive inhumations being cut through earlier ones and a case of multiple burials of six adults and an infant (associated with a female, possibly the mother) who had been successively interred.

Other graves lay outside the main nucleus, spreading across the courtyard. These occurred mostly in isolation, being west-east oriented and laid out in neat grave pits. Additionally, four burials were found clustered together in the south western corner of the courtyard enclosure, being north-south aligned and probably contemporary with each other.

In general, the burials on site were laid out with care in grave-pits of varying depth and width. Evidence emerged for the use of wooden coffins in many instances, with two examples of burials in stone cists being also recorded. Grave goods were almost absent and limited to personal objects and one beaker (dated to the first half of the IV century). Due to the paucity of dating evidence it was not possible to establish phases of burial. Therefore, the graves may have spread from the main nucleus to the working areas or, vice versa, they could have been concentrated after a period of haphazard burial or there might have been cases of both.



The skeletal analysis showed that the burials belonged to people involved in regular physical work. Additionally, a significant proportion of individuals appears to have shared the same genetic traits. This suggests a sequence of one (or more ?) family groups on site which could explain the layout of the cemetery in the paddock (and, it may be added, the presence of burial groups in the plots within the courtyard).

The only cremation on site was placed in two urns (dated around the late II-early III century) within a wooden casket; there were no associated grave-goods. More cremations may have been originally present on site, being ploughed away and destroyed.

Although there was no direct stratigraphic link between the burials and the farm, the fact that the main nucleus of burials respected the edge of the courtyard could indicate that the farm (or at least part of it) and the cemetery were in use at the same time.

## V.5 PATRONAGE AND CEMETERY MANAGEMENT

It is reasonable to assume that in the context of the rural sites burials were laid out in private (or rented) properties which were not subjected to any forms of external control but that exercised by the occupants of the site. The small number of burials which probably belonged to one single family group or extended kin may have not required any form of complex pre-arranged planning. However, the organised character of the cemeteries indicates that not just mere chance but a component of intervention was involved. This may explain the apparent conformity in cemetery organisation displayed by some rural sites, which could not be otherwise interpreted as the result of a policy of direct control by the urban authorities. It is interesting to observe that despite the absence of evidence for laws regulating the mode of burial in rural locations, the cemeteries for the burial of adults were set apart from the farm-buildings as a possible echo of the enforced custom of extra-mural burial in town.

Conformity could have been the result of imposition by influential land-owners or simply due to attempts to emulate fashionable trends. Interference by the landlords in religious matters are not unknown, especially in Christian context (7). It cannot be excluded that a deed of intervention in the observance of religious practices may have been in act especially when 'tied property' relations existed between the land lord and the members of his household. This last observation gives rise to a series of questions concerning the position of the rural population from a social point of view and stresses the need to propose more articulated models of 'tenurial' relationships.

The tenurial links between estates and their dependent properties remain elusive and even more so the evidence for a free peasantry in Roman times. Any discussion which tries to untangle these matters remains therefore confined to the realm of the hypothetical. Comparisons with more apparent, although exceptional, forms of burial in the context of the villa estates and, in particular, the limited number of formal cemeteries or, as at Chignall (Rankov 1982), their relatively extensive size and uniformity, would exclude the presence of the villa owners among the burials. What is more probable is that, in some cases, the estate owners granted portions of land for the burial of the workers or the members of the household (whether *servi* or *liberti*, including the bailiffs) as a result of personal or legal ties.

It is known that some owners provided facilities for the labourers as a form of patronage. For instance, at Bricket Wood, near St. Albans (Herts.), there were small bath houses; fragments of beakers and pewter cups show that social activities, such as drinking, may have been carried out. Similarly, in the IV century the villa at Park Street, near St Albans, had two separate suites of baths, a better one (for the

owner/bailiffs?) and a smaller lower quality one (for the workers?) (O'Neil 1945). At Gorhambury the villa was rebuilt in the late II-early III century with the addition of a bath house for the farm-workers (Neal *et al.* 1990). Shrines have been increasingly recognised as being an integral part of Roman-British domestic sites (Boon 1983). Rodwell has drawn a typology of temples and shrines both in rural and urban contexts. With reference to the former, 'types 1-4' in particular are described as proprietary and related to the villa buildings or the estate and used by the owner and his immediate household or, as in the case of detached shrines located in close proximity to and at a certain distance from the villa, by the resident family and retainers alike (Rodwell 1980b). An example of the latter could be represented by the circular shrine at Bancroft (mid IV century) the basic character of which is in contrast with the opulence of the villa complex and its associated octagonal building (a private shrine?) (Williams & Zeevat 1994). The presence of shrines on villa estates could be interpreted as an act of patronage, although the identity of the officering persons (priests, villa owners or members of a *collegium*) remains elusive. Whether local cult centres or major rural sanctuaries for wider catchment areas were sponsored by the villa owners or the urban authorities (or both) or benefited from other forms of sponsorship is uncertain. The complex at Wood Lane End, for example, includes a temple, a mausoleum and a small bath-house located within an enclosure. A further building possibly used by a guild of worshippers stands outside the enclosure (Branigan 1994b, 114). The relative scarcity of votive offerings and coins indicates that the site was little used. It is tempting to establish a correlation between the temple site and the villa at Gorhambury and interpret the religious complex (probably devoted to a rural deity) as an act of munificence with the subsidisation of a religious association by a local landowner (8).

That patronage may have played a major role in burial matters is difficult to prove in absence of the more direct evidence from epigraphic material and written sources. However, it would partly explain the diffusion of common trends in matters of cemetery organisation which reflect, especially during the later period, the character of the urban cemeteries. The model of patronage could apply to the farmsteads which may have housed tenants or labourers of the villas. The argument remains hypothetical as it is uncertain whether the occupants of the farmsteads maintained a certain degree of autonomy throughout the Roman period or were progressively tied to the land in the orbit of the major villa estates (see Ch. I). What seems to emerge is that patronage played an important role in the fabric of social relationships in the countryside by the creation of social obligations. This implies that the tenants on a villa estate were and remained nominally free. However, when accepting the proposed examples as forms of patronage, the owners may have regulated and

controlled the associative needs of the tenants. How far this control may have extended to affect the disposal of the dead is difficult to establish. It has been suggested that patronage was of limited importance in providing burial, except where close personal relationships bound together the patron and the deceased in which each party had legally defined obligations (Patterson 1995). For instance, it has been argued that the monumental tombs at Keston were designed for the land-owner and his family whereas the surrounding graves belonged to the servants (Philp 1969).

Unless the tenants were also land owners, it is difficult to explain the presence of burials. There was no Roman law (and the custom stands out against it) that declared that a building, once it was erected, was permanent. However, laws existed that made burials inviolable and permanent (see Ch. IV). At least in legal theory, once a plot had been given away for burial use, it was for good and burials could not be moved even when a property was sold or a dwelling demolished. The fact that it was felt so necessary to guarantee the inviolability of the burials could indicate that change in land-ownership was fairly common in Roman times. It would also imply that a portion of land given over to burial was lost to agriculture. Therefore no forms of tenorial agreement *stricto sensu* could be applied to a cemetery. Unless the tenants owned their parcel for burial, the burial areas must have been granted (or rented or even sold) by the estate-owner. The law against violation of the tomb may have been a customary right. Even so, this need not have excluded patronage, especially when considering that burials were sometimes disturbed and funerary monuments robbed in spite of severe sanctions and fines. Patronage could have represented a means to control the workers and unify the labour force by binding the latter to the land in return for the preservation of the religious *loca* for the dead and, possibly, continuity of burial rights in the eventuality of a change in ownership. The cemetery at Lynch Farm has considerable implications for both tenorial and social aspects. It seems to have represented the burial ground for a small group of farm workers who could hardly have exceeded one family at a time over the period of occupation (during the III-first half of the IV century). Jones (1975) has addressed a series of questions, namely how far the evidence from the cemetery may apply to social arrangement and, if the farmstead was integrated with a larger estate, what was the significance of the separation in burial. The same kinds of questions arise when dealing with other sites such as the nucleated settlement at Catsgore. There, the burials were placed at the rear of the buildings close to and aligned upon the boundary ditches between complexes and may have represented family burial plots (Leech 1982).

It is possible that whatever the theoretical legal position of land tenure may have been, the people of the farmsteads maintained some degree of social independence,

being at the same time integrated in the complex mechanism of social relations as expressed in Roman institutional forms such as patronage.

## V.6 CONCLUSION

With the exception of a few forms of burial in mausolea or substantial body containers more commonly found in the towns or on the villa estates, as a whole the character of the rural cemeteries appears to conform to the evidence from the burial grounds in urban locations. In particular, following the adoption of inhumation as the dominant funerary rite, burials came to be arranged in more or less organised lines and rows, suggesting that markers may have been originally employed. The graves were uniform in size, shape and orientation, the bodies laid out extended and supine with the occurrence of prone burials and decapitation. Furnishing was limited to the deposition of coins, hobnails and personal objects.

A tendency towards conservatism in the observance of some burial customs may have characterised those isolated rural areas where the influence exerted by the towns was weaker. Furthermore, Pre-Roman practices such as excarnation and informal burial could have continued without leaving a tangible trace in the archaeological record. Nonetheless, the recurrence of particular internal features together with the progressive tendency towards homogeneity in terms of internal organisation would suggest that the cemeteries displayed common features. In other words, the urban or rural connotation of a cemetery does not appear to have represented the most important and absolute distinction in the performance of Romano-British burial. There were no practices exclusively characteristic of the towns as all rites, with varying intensity and significance, were performed at both classes of sites (Esmonde Cleary 1995).

At a deeper level, the deriving implications are undoubtedly more subtle than on the surface, reflecting the complexity of both the equilibrium between binomial (but not antithetical) poles in the landscape, i.e. town and country, and the autonomous interpretation of and response to the system of social relations. This even manifests itself in the apparent discrepancy between the situation for the villa and non-villa sites. Although there was no apparent law against people from the countryside burying their dead in the town cemeteries, what seems to emerge from the evidence is that the shift in burial location from the rural to the urban areas affected predominantly the high classes, i.e. the same classes who were directly involved in the administration of the towns and probably owned the rich urban houses. In comparison, based on the available evidence for burials on farmsteads as opposed to villas (above), whether for economic or logistic reasons, ritual habit (the Pre-Roman practice of excarnation may have survived in some rural areas) or tied tenurial relationships under the aegis of patronage, the town cemeteries do not appear to have 'attracted' the inhabitants of the 'farmsteads'.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER V

(1) In particular, rites such as decapitation and burial in stone-lined graves seem to have originated in rural areas to spread to the urban cemeteries (Philpott 1991).

(2) The relationship between the villa at Gorhambury and the complex at Wood Lane End is controversial. From a chronological point of view, whereas the latter appears to have been demolished at the end of the II-early III century, the former was extended in the late II century to be temporarily abandoned in the first half of the III century. Although re-occupied, the villa buildings declined and occupation ceased by the middle of the IV century. The decline of the villa seems to pre-date Magnētius' events (ca. 350 AD).

Furthermore, it has been recently suggested that the sanctuary at Wood Lane End had its own farms and estates to support the up-keep of the religious complex and related staff. No working farm buildings were identified. However, two possible granaries were recorded which, in comparison with the villa nearby, displayed an exceptional size (Neal *et al.* 1990).

(3) For the significance of infant burials in Romano-British villas, see Scott 1991. For the presence of infant burials in formal cemeteries besides adults, and related Christian implications, see Watts 1991.

(4) Percival (1976) has observed that the villas survived in the Post-Roman period but not as villas *stricto sensu*. The phenomena of foundation of medieval churches (Morris & Roxan 1980) and the creation of cemeteries upon or near Roman buildings, especially villas, become apparent from the end of the Roman period onwards. With regards to the latter, examples come from Gaul, the Rhine and the Danube Provinces. The presence of undated burials on former villas gives rise to the question of continuity. At a number of sites the evidence seems to stand out against continuity, especially when pagan Saxon burials have been found in or near a deserted villa (Applebaum 1972, 259).

In general terms, it is difficult to establish whether burial was intentional or accidental and, if intentional, to interpret the significance of its occurrence. Several hypotheses have been offered: namely, the ruins of a villa were suitable for a cemetery to avoid encroaching upon land needed for cultivation. This would suggest (with no conclusive evidence) that pressure on land was great (Percival 1976, 183-99). Alternatively, it has been argued that burials in villas may have been the manifestation of a more general process of inversion whereby the domestic, industrial and funerary facilities of the site were regrouped within the former living quarters (Webster 1969, 231-34). What can be observed is that, although the placing of burials was a religious act, the use of a ruined villa as a cemetery (on the Continent as well as in Britain) did not lead to any further religious development.

Williams (1997) has recently reviewed the evidence for the re-use of 'ancient' (prehistoric and Roman) monuments as Early Anglo-Saxon burial sites, placing emphasis on the concept of ritual appropriation of the past. Accordingly, it is possible that Anglo-Saxon burials were re-using abandoned structures and sites (for instance, to legitimise claims over land) rather than continuing their use. In the case of large cemeteries, the ancient monuments may have been regarded as important land-marks for the congregation of the community/communities for the performance of mortuary and other social practices (process of 'ethnogenesis'). At the same time, there was a deliberate re-use of ancient monuments as symbols of power and status, explaining the occurrence of isolated graves or small groups of them.

(5) In the Catuvellauni territory the evidence from the cemeteries is reflected by the wealth of the early villas that exceeded that of all but a few exceptional town-houses (Branigan 1985, 128-130).

(6) At the nucleated settlement at Neatham, not far away from Alton, evidence has emerged for a certain degree of building sophistication (e.g. houses with plastered and painted walls) which points to a 'smattering of Roman habits' (Branigan 1980, 209).

(7) See Salway (1985) on *Cod. Theod.* XVI V. 52: beating was recommended in order to help the workers to attend to their devotions more readily.

(8) The self-governing nature of the *collegia* (as attested by the club regulations on the Continent) need not have excluded patronage. Parallels exist on the Continent. For example, according to an inscription from Italy, Marcus Valerius Dexter made a donation to the *Familia Silvani*, a guild who worshipped the Roman god Silvanus (Patterson 1995).



# CHAPTER VI

## DISCUSSION

### (A Tendency Towards Homogeneity in The Late Romano-British Cemeteries)

In the tradition of the studies on the Romano-British cemeteries, analyses have aimed at the investigation of specific traits of burial mainly relating to the composition of the grave-goods, the treatment of the bodies, and the personal beliefs of the deceased and his/her family. Alternatively, studies have been confined to the description of individual cemetery-sites and, in rare instances, to the investigation of known cemeteries distributed around the parent town. When possible, attempts have also been made to integrate the information from the burial grounds with the data from the suburban contexts by means of topographic research.

In general, there has been a shortage of comparative studies between cemeteries in Roman Britain. These studies have been traditionally confined to the search for specific features (i.e. evidence for Christianity, patterns of orientation, and so on). As a result of the state of the traditional research, with the present thesis the author has aimed towards the analysis of traits which have been underestimated, or employed to make general assumptions in the past. In particular, evidence of external features, or context of location, and internal evidence relating to the organisation of the burial grounds have been of paramount importance, the emphasis on location and internal layout being relevant to the investigation of aspects of cemetery management. Since the burial grounds were an integrated part of the suburbs, the question as to whether they were subjected to some degree of planning is justified. In particular, the context of location was analysed in order to determine whether the criteria for the choice of areas to be destined for burial remained consistent throughout the Roman period. Internal features which could provide evidence for organisation were investigated in the attempt to understand whether they may have stemmed from mere chance, religious beliefs or urban regulation. In particular, the aim of the investigation was to define the facet of the extensive inhumation cemeteries, the appearance of which seems to have characterised the IV century, as the result of increased civic and/or religious control. The content of the research becomes even more significant in the light of

the general absence of legal or any other sources concerning the modality of disposal of the dead.

In order to define the character of the late cemeteries, it was necessary to conduct a preliminary analysis of the earlier (cremation) cemeteries and hence to consider the impact of Roman burial on the native *substratum*.

The analysis has been purposely confined to the situation for Roman Britain, the emphasis been placed on the character of Britannia as a *provincia limitanea* within the broader context of the Western Empire.

As stated in the general introduction, the traditional approaches seem to provide only partial explanations for the appearance of the extensive inhumation cemeteries during the IV century. Furthermore, there has been no attempt to link the phenomenon to a context of analysis of continuity and change, regional variation and, as we shall see in the course of the present chapter, progressive tendency towards uniformity in burial, and related causal factors.

## VI.1 INTRODUCTION

'The alignment of the various groups of tombs in a single cemetery are sometimes so different from one another that we can only deduce the absence of any public control of a cemetery' (Toynbee 1971, 14). The haphazard plans of many burial sites in Italy as well as in other areas of the Empire seem to confirm Toynbee's observation (*ibid.*). However, my research suggests that with reference to Roman Britain the cemeteries, whether laid out to accommodate earlier cremation or later inhumation burials (or both), tend to display evidence for internal organisation (See Chs. II and III). More specifically, throughout the period of Roman occupation the cemeteries in the South East retained a certain degree of homogeneity in terms of internal layout (with the burials orderly arranged in lines and rows or groups, sometimes enclosed by ditches and marked by wooden structures on the surface) which seems to have stemmed from the tradition of the Pre-Roman cremation cemeteries.

By contrast, during the earlier centuries outside the area where cremation was the dominant burial practice prior to the advent of the Romans the internal character of the burial grounds seems to have varied from site to site. In the north the military cemeteries (as at Little Chester, High Rochester, York (1), etc.) display evidence for the employment of Romanised forms (namely mausolea or inscribed stones) which failed to provoke a major impact on the native customs. At the same time, in most areas of central-southern Britain where a tradition of formal cemeteries and, in many instances, the practice of cremation were apparently uncommon, the cemeteries were an external introduction and thus subjected to different degrees of external influence. This may partly account for the variable character of the cemeteries in terms of internal layout, probably depending on the role and function of the parent settlement in Roman times. Overall, the absence of specific native features (above as well as under ground) from the urban cemeteries in central-southern Britain may be indicative of the attitude towards burial as displayed prior to the advent of the Romans.

Against this general background, an exception is represented by some burial sites in Dorset. There, the native tradition of formal cemeteries survived together with crouched inhumation as the dominant burial practice against the widespread trend of cremation (Leech 1980) (see, for instance, Alington Avenue, Fordington, Dorchester). As in the South-East, the presence of pre-Roman formal cemeteries in Dorset may account for the strong survival of local practices into the later period.

Towards the end of the III century this scenario changes in correlation with the progressive adoption of the practice of supine and extended inhumation as the dominant mode of burial. With it, especially in urban contexts, the creation of fairly

extensive and internally uniform cemeteries becomes a widespread phenomenon which is consistent throughout Roman Britain.

## VI.2 LOCATION OF THE LATE ROMANO-BRITISH CEMETERIES

I have argued that the change which altered the facet of the late Romano-British cemeteries does not appear to have affected the basic criterion behind the allocation of areas for burial use in the suburbs: the main rule remained that a cemetery had to be laid out outside the built-up area of a settlement. This same basic criterion does not seem to have conditioned the choice of land (whether ex-agricultural or ex-industrial (i.e. marginal) in use) to be given over for the creation of a cemetery, the primary topographic feature consisting of the presence of an access-way, generally a major road leading to the settlement.

Broadly speaking, throughout the period of Roman occupation there are no specific patterns of shift towards or away from the town characteristic of any given period nor is there evidence for preferential choices of land. Usually, when changes occur they seem to be dictated by development strategies and planning policies in relation to criteria of expansion and contraction of portions of the suburban area. From this perspective, the Romano-British cemeteries are dynamic creations and their dynamism reflects processes of change (not necessarily or exclusively of decline) involving their parent towns. The urban authority is probably responsible for establishing the location of the cemeteries or, at least, for ensuring that the 'law' is complied with. Even the creation of cemeteries exclusively laid out for inhumation burials during the IV century appears to be primarily dictated by pragmatic reasons, probably due to the necessity of creating new space for the disposal of 'cumbersome' corpses. In fact, the existence of long-lived cemeteries of mixed burial rites which survived into the IV century indicates that shift/re-location of the burial grounds, though a widespread phenomenon in late Roman Britain, was not normative (see Ch. III).

There is no progression of the dead towards the living nor is there movement away from the city and the values that the city embodies. Above all, the space for the living and the space for the dead are still kept rigorously separate, notwithstanding the fact that they shared the same population since the urban cemeteries were primarily, although not exclusively, created for the population who resided in town. On the basis of the available evidence for occupation of the suburbs (including the burial grounds), there is reason to believe that the late Romano-British towns still retained a considerable population (see Ch. I).

### VI.3 INTERNAL LAYOUT OF THE LATE CEMETERIES

According to my interpretation, what appears to represent a major change from the previous period is the way the burial areas are internally organised both with reference to the cemeteries created *ex novo* during the IV century and the pre-existing ones. In the IV century, the cemeteries display a higher and more uniform degree of internal organisation than before with the burials being orderly laid out in lines and rows, often on the same orientation (see Ch. III). The few areas which do not conform to this general pattern stand out as exceptional cases (e.g. Bath Gate at Cirencester for which, however, the chronology of the coins and some artefacts suggests that the cemetery may have begun its life prior to the IV century [Reece 1982a] or Trentholme Drive at York where disturbance of the earlier interments appears to have been partially caused by continued use of the ground over a long period of time [Wenham 1968]). Moreover, in the later period the tendency towards standardisation 'above ground' is paralleled by an equal tendency towards standardisation 'under ground'. In comparison with the situation for the earlier period, not only do the late Romano-British cemeteries display a higher and more uniform degree of standardisation in terms of general organisation and internal layout, but also increasing uniformity in burial rite 'which is perhaps as close as Romano-British practice ever comes to a standard national rite' (Philpott 1991, 224). Aspects of regionalism tend to become less apparent, the common denominator behind funerary practices being represented by the adoption of the rite of inhumation through a steady, although fairly slow, process of assimilation which involved the major towns and the military forts first, the minor urban centres and, finally, the rural areas. The mediation of the major towns is likely to have accelerated the process explaining the resounding effects of the new trend which came to affect even the most conservative areas such as Dorset, for example, where the tradition of crouched burials was substituted by the practice of extended and supine inhumations.

Although still physically separate, in late Roman Britain the organisation of the space for the dead is as close as it ever came to the organisation of the space for the living.

### VI.4 THE EVIDENCE FOR MANAGEMENT

That increased uniformity i.e. tendency towards standardisation, as displayed by the majority of the late Romano-British cemeteries, represented an element of

distinction from the previous period is plausible. More problematic is to attempt to interpret its significance and, in particular, to establish its causes.

As an urban phenomenon in origin, internal organisation is likely to have partially derived from continued, although not necessarily increased, management for decline or relaxation of the latter would have probably been reflected in the nature of the former. In addition, urban management would refer to both major (i.e. administrative) and minor (i.e. market) centres, as the sample of cemeteries analysed in the course of the present work is internally consistent to suggest that size or status of a settlement did not necessarily constitute factors of discrimination in terms of cemetery planning (or, more generally, suburban development).

#### VI.4.i INCREASED BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL OVER THE LAYOUT OF THE CEMETERIES?

With reference to the late inhumation cemeteries management has been related to historical factors such as the consolidation of the Church (Wilson 1968, Green 1982) or the reorganisation of the Provinces of the Empire under Diocletian (Philpott 1991, 227).

With reference to the latter, it has been tentatively suggested that the creation of a strong bureaucratic apparatus with the tightening-up of local forms of administration may have had consequences on the internal development of the cemeteries (*ibid.*). Planning would have extended from the general allocation of an area in the suburbs for the creation of a cemetery to the specific allocation of plots within the cemetery itself. Following the turmoil of the III century, the idea of a stronger connection between administration (mainly in the form of tax levy) and towns during the reign of Diocletian would seem justified: the intervention would have aimed at the revitalisation of the town as a centre of attraction and the reinforcement of the state as a functional apparatus. The too often exaggerated relaxation in the conduct of civic offices (traditionally ascribed to the 'increasingly burdensome' position of the *decuriones* who had become liable for the tax deficit) has been seen as the explanation and cause for the enforcement of bureaucratic control over the towns (see Ch. I). A growing body of evidence indicates that the town in late Roman Britain had changed roles, the emphasis being placed on its administrative functions (Esmonde Cleary 1993, *passim*). In broad terms, in the IV century all types of public buildings which had characterised the early towns went out of use as they were no longer found useful for social-political functions. This trend is reflected by the shift in expenditure from the public to the private sphere (below). Yet, the changed role of the town and its allegedly growing importance in

the system of taxation did not cause a breakdown of urban life in Roman Britain (see Ch. I). The towns may have been increasingly dominated by functionaries, but they were still places given over partly to manufacture and trade (as suggested by the presence of timber artisan buildings) and, with reference to the major centres, they specialised in the provision of services (Branigan 1991, 12-13).

If the specific effects of increased bureaucratic control over the administration of the Romano-British towns are difficult to trace, they are even more so in the context of the normative regulation of the burial grounds. As stated above, during the late III-IV century there is no apparent change in planning policy, apart from a few instances of cemetery re-location. Yet, the phenomenon of cemetery relocation could have been dictated by practical reasons as the systematic progression of the burial grounds away from the town at Lankhills (Winchester), for instance, would suggest and may not represent an exclusive trait of the later period. There are known cases of settlements provided with more than one (cremation) cemetery in the earlier period, e.g. at Baldock (Stead & Rigby 1986) and Braughing (Partridge 1977; *Id.* 1981), which appear to have been concurrently in use. However, contemporary use does not necessarily imply contemporary creation. *Viceversa*, the phenomenon of cemetery relocation in the course of the IV century should not be taken as an evidence for the abandonment of the earlier cemeteries (above).

As far as the internal layout of the burial grounds is concerned, that Empire-wide trends, with particular reference to the diffusion of the practice of inhumation in the later period, exerted influence on the form the cemetery took in IV century Britain cannot be doubted. Yet, my interpretation of the data seems to suggest that this influence could have only been incidental. The explanation for the tendency towards homogeneity in terms of increased administration over the layout of the cemeteries is far from being entirely satisfactory for a number of reasons. In particular, the most distinguishing traits of the late Romano-British cemeteries are too widely distributed around settlements which range from urban to rural to stem from reinforced bureaucratic control alone. Even when assuming, for sake of argument only, that the minor towns started to exert certain administrative functions as the result of the decentralisation of tax collection (Millett 1990, 133 ff.) and assuming therefore that they were provided with a relevant bureaucratic apparatus, the argument is still unsatisfactory. To date, the rank and related administrative functions of the majority of the so-called minor urban centres remain elusive. Above all, increased bureaucratic control over the towns would not explain the occurrence of the phenomenon of organised cemeteries outside the urban centres or, *vice versa*, the lack of organisation in those cemeteries associated with major administrative centres. From this perspective it does not come as a surprise that the supposedly growing emphasis on the bureaucratic apparatus of the towns failed to

affect the internal organisation of those very cemeteries associated with centres such as Cirencester (Bath Gate) and York (Trentholme Drive) which are known to have exercised a specific administrative function as Provincial Capitals of *Britannia Prima* and *Britannia Secunda* respectively from the early IV century.

Moving to the second form of authority, i.e. the Church, the influence of current beliefs together with 'propagandistic' trends, could have partly conditioned and accelerated the diffusion of certain practices which had been adopted, but not necessarily introduced *ex novo*, by the Christians themselves. However, both the historical and the archaeological evidence for a strong Church in Britain is not conclusive: there is no reason to believe that the Church in Britain exerted so strong a power as to participate in the management of State affairs, let alone to dictate *ad libitum* in funerary matters from an administrative point of view (Ch I). The evidence for Christian cemeteries in Roman Britain is still controversial and even when potential Christian cemeteries are encountered, they do not display a character of exclusiveness: Christians and pagans alike were buried in the same ground (see Ch. III and IV). Above all, the creation of most inhumation cemeteries is too early in date to be attributed to the Church as a consolidated official apparatus in Roman Britain.

My research suggests that both factors, and probably in conjunction from the reign of Constantine the Great, i.e. intervention of the state and increasing popularity of the Church, may have been powerful elsewhere in the Empire. However, their direct influence on the state of affairs in Roman Britain as a whole, let alone the cemeteries, has to be assessed with caution.

#### VI.4.ii INCREASED BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL OVER THE RITUAL ASPECTS?

The idea of a connection between bureaucratic supervision and the organisation of the late Romano-British cemeteries has not been entirely disregarded, although presented with a good dose of caution. The absence of written sources does not necessarily stand against it. What is more doubtful is whether this supervision increased during the late III- IV century. Even when assuming that a higher degree of control may have been exerted by the local administrators over the position of the graves to avoid, for instance intercutting and disturbance of earlier interments, as the efficient organisation of the burials in rows and plots might suggest (Thomas 1981, 232), it is more difficult to accept that 'control over burial had extended to



the funeral itself' (Philpott 1991, 227), the choice of a specific plot, the furnishing, the treatment of the body, *etc.* Not only would this imply a strong will of intervention by the state through the control of the funerary rituals for which, at present, there is no conclusive evidence nor satisfactory reason, but also that uniformity within the cemeteries necessarily translates in lack of personal intervention in matters of burial.

The legitimacy of generalising from the context of the living to the funerary sample and hence to the whole of the buried population remains highly questionable. In other words, the effects of increased bureaucratic control over a town need not extend to the context of burial. Hence, two questions should be addressed: namely, how real is the absence of personal choice in funerary matters and to what extent has homogeneity to be attributed to the passive acceptance of reinforced laws, always assuming that such laws ever existed. The presence of cemeteries with a visible assortment of grave goods and variety of body treatments, containers and burial markers is generally taken as an indication that particular processes of selection were in action. Nonetheless, it should not be accepted that a population with a tradition of unaccompanied inhumations and apparently uniform burial rites always left homogeneous cemeteries with no patterns of selection (Jones 1989, 284-285), for these patterns may simply be elusive. Above all, homogeneity could be the result of a conscious choice.

With reference to the late inhumation cemeteries in Roman Britain, Philpott (1991, 231) observes the occurrence of two trends, a decrease in the number of furnished graves and, at the same time, a growing use of different ways to denote the importance of the burial. Accordingly, the new wealth/status indicators took the form of markers such as mausolea, mounds, gullies around the grave(s) and step-graves, or special body containers such as substantial wooden, stone and lead coffins. This phenomenon has been interpreted as evidence for a shift in the emphasis on demonstrating social status and wealth away from grave furnishing and towards new means of reinforcing social distinction, as a consequence of the decreasing importance of the grave goods and the growing emphasis on the preservation of the material remains of the dead under religious influence (*ibid.*).

Only to mention a few examples from the selection of cemeteries analysed in the course of the present work, Philpott's observation is valid in the case of Poundbury where a wide range of body containers was recorded including substantial wooden, lead and stone coffins associated with mausolea and ditched enclosures around the graves. On the other hand, at Lankhills the presence of burial markers (step-graves, mounds and gullies) does not seem to have excluded the deposition of goods. In fact, here the proportion of furnished graves was still high in the second half of the IV century in contrast with the main stream of late

Romano-British burial practices of unfurnished burials. Finally, at Cirencester apart from a few stone coffins little evidence for both grave goods and grave markers or body containers was observed. There, availability of raw material from the local quarries may have played a part in the choice of the body container.

In synthesis, my interpretation of the evidence for the IV century would suggest that, not only do the means to express status become less apparent than before (as in the decreased quantity and more homogenous quality of the grave goods) but, even when present, they do not seem to represent an exclusive trait of the late Romano-British cemeteries. For example, it could be argued that substantial body containers simply took the place of the earlier urns (ranging from pottery to glass and metal) or more elaborate forms of cremation containers (such as stone or tile cists). *Vice versa*, as there is a record of 'unenclosed' cremations there is equally evidence for 'uncoffined' inhumations or more probably, cremations and inhumations in perishable containers such as wood or leather which did not survive. The same may apply to the grave markers: mausolea or other forms of substantial markers simply replaced, or appeared in conjunction with, more traditional forms such as ditched enclosures and posted-structures the origin of which, at least in South East Britain, roots back into pre-Roman times (see examples in Black 1986).

An exception is represented by the cemetery at Lankhills, Winchester (see Ch.I note 28 and Ch. III.2.i). At Lankhills a change from the previous situation where the proportion of furnishing was high but the class of the goods homogeneous, seems to have occurred through the introduction of new categories of objects (attributed to the presence of foreigners), and through the deposition of items of precious material, a good proportion of which has been dated to the second half of the IV century. In the present state of the knowledge, the evidence for foreign burials in the context of the late Romano-British cemeteries remains elusive and any attempt at interpretation risks to fall through. Nonetheless, one may wonder whether at Lankhills the high percentage of grave furnishing that has been related to the presence of foreign elements around the middle of the IV century (Clarke 1979) (Ch. I, note 28; Ch. III.2.i) was more generally connected to the process of social change occurring on the Continent as a result of the consolidation of the position of the 'barbarians' within the Empire (Cameron 1994). Even assuming that foreigners were buried at Lankhills and accepting that new means of expressing identity (in this particular instance in the form of different categories of grave goods) might have been employed as a form of social or ethnic advertisement, at present Lankhills remains an isolated example in the context of late Roman Britain.

Overall, I have argued that in the majority of the late inhumation cemeteries there is little or comparatively even less evidence for social display than before. However, this is not necessarily due to increased administrative control over the burial practices or to the enforcement of standard rituals, whether in religious or secular context. As in Childe's theory, 'in a stable society the grave goods (and, it may be added, other means to express status in death) tend to grow relatively and even absolutely fewer and poorer as time goes on' (Childe 1945, 17) until 'the stability of a society is upset... so that... social advertisement in death ritual may be expressly overt where changing relations of domination result in status re-ordering and consolidating of new social positions' (Parker Pearson 1982, 112). In comparison with the situation on the Continent, in late Roman Britain there is no evidence for the emergence of new social classes or new social forces nor does there appear to be any reason for dramatic ethnic tension (See Ch. I) (2). As a consequence, the fact that the means of expressing wealth and status in death are fewer in the archaeological record could simply indicate that in the IV century there was no need for class advertisement in death, without necessarily implying that society in late Roman Britain was egalitarian, the emphasis being placed not on social equality but on internal social stability.

## VI.5 SOCIAL STABILITY: THE CEMETERIES AS AN EXPRESSION OF CIVIC PRIDE

In order to clarify this statement it is necessary to return to the analysis of the late Romano-British town. As stated at the beginning of the present chapter, it is likely that the cemeteries in an urban location served mainly, though not exclusively, the urban population (see Ch. V). It is only towards the end of the IV century that the situation appears to change when most of the cemeteries ceased to be in use soon after AD 400. By then, the urban residents may have been buried elsewhere without implying desertion of the towns. However, there is no conclusive evidence to support this hypothesis. More convincingly, there was a withdrawal of the population since at only a limited number of towns is there conclusive evidence for occupation beyond AD 400, or an overall decline in the size of the population occurred (see Ch. I). It is only with the breaking down of the Roman system in the early V century that the urban centres ceased to be useful to people and therefore lost their *raison d'être* and it is with the breaking down of the towns that the majority of the known cemeteries, not surprisingly, went out of use (3).

During the IV century the Romano-British town is still in place. Yet, in comparison with the situation for the earlier period, two major changes are visible. It is the

town which represents the arena for social and wealth display albeit in a different form, i.e. by private consumption of wealth as opposed to the traditional public forms to express civic pride which characterised the I and II century. In archaeological terms, the most distinguishing feature of the urban centres in the later period is represented by the absence of public buildings and, at the same time, by the dominance of the town-houses to suggest wealth and status (Esmonde Cleary 1993).

The second major element of distinction of the IV century town is represented by a partial shift of emphasis from the rural to the urban context to express wealth (see Ch V). Whereas during the earlier centuries the towns were the focus of elite competition in the provision of public buildings and amenities, the countryside was the focus for the act of burial, often in a lavish fashion as the cemetery sites at Welwyn (Rook 1973; 1984) and Skeleton Green (Braughing), for instance, would suggest.

Underlying these patterns of change are further implications. Following the Roman conquest, the town, as an intrusive idea, must have been perceived as the intrusive arena for the display of patronage and munificence by means of Romanised forms. The fact that the urban pattern of life was alien to the local British population could have justified the need for constant encouragement from the authorities to express civic pride through the public display of munificence. At the same time the rural context remained the traditional arena to express wealth and status by means of burial, often in a combination of native and imported fashion ranging from the display of grave-goods to the employment of body containers and the construction of substantial memorial structures. On this subject, it is interesting to notice that burial on the villa estates never represented a widespread phenomenon in Roman Britain (see Ch. V). The absence of burials associated with the villa sites may indicate that the town, by comparison, exerted a stronger power of attraction on the newly urbanised elite, i.e. the same elite who owned the rural estates.

By the IV century, not only was there a change from public to private forms of display but also an extension of the arena for display from the rural to the urban context: the town had become an acceptable place to express private wealth, possibly as the result of a progressive movement away from regional 'native' practices. Social advertisement emerged in private forms of investment by the wealthiest individuals and the town-houses (and suburban villas) referred to above are clear evidence for this. The fact that the towns had become an acceptable place for private consumption and expenditure may also indicate that the need for public advertisement was no longer felt for the town was fully established with all the values that it represented.

At the same time, in contrast with the earlier trend, wealth does not appear to have found particular expression in the context of the later burials (4), not even in those areas in the South East where the deposition of lavish furnishing, for example, had represented a distinctive trait of the cemeteries during the late Pre-Roman Iron Age and the early Roman period.

From a social point of view, the main tendency in late Roman Britain seems to have been towards the reproduction of a levelled society in funerary context. Overall, as my research would suggest, there appears to have been no need to overtly express private wealth in burial (whether in an urban or rural context): the elite was established and did not need to legitimate their power by the exploitation of large resources or by the adoption of exclusive burial rites. An additional explanation for the tendency towards uniformity as displayed by the late cemeteries could lie in the fact that whereas in the earlier period there was no real scope for private display in the town but only in the context of the cemeteries, in the later period the progression from the country to the town in the expression of private wealth may have made the urban (as well as rural) cemeteries redundant for this purpose, the cemeteries becoming instead the focal point for the expression of the collective imagery of the town. By stretching this observation further, it could be argued that it is the cemetery which becomes the privileged arena for the communication of 'civic pride' with a reversal of the earlier pattern where civic pride found expression in the town and display of private wealth occurred in the cemeteries. Not surprisingly, the apparent uniformity displayed by the late burial grounds conform with the collective nature of many dedications on the earlier public buildings (Blagg 1986) to emphasise the sense of community above the individual. From this perspective, the degree of internal organisation of the cemeteries with burials laid out in neat lines and rows, together with the tendency towards homogeneity, could represent a will of intervention by the urban community to express their sense of belonging through the representation of the city of the dead on the 'idealised' image of the city of the living. Underlying this trend, is the more subtle representation of a stable, but not egalitarian, society or at least of a society which is still perceived or portrayed as stable: the legitimacy of power simply deriving from the location of the burials in the context of the town with the emphasis being placed on the representation of family ties to express continuity (below).

## VI.6 FAMILY GROUPS IN THE CEMETERIES

I have argued that the idea of the IV century cemetery as a new means of expressing civic pride and legitimating power is not in contradiction with the theory

of management mentioned above nor with the interpretation of the phenomenon in Christian terms. Both factors, increased bureaucratic control and the diffusion of Christian beliefs, may have played a part, together with the circulation of fashionable trends throughout the Empire. However, what has been argued so far is that these factors may have been only incidental, the Romano-British cemeteries being dynamic creations with far more subtle implications.

As suggested, not only is the tendency towards standardisation in burial an active choice but also an attempt by the community to represent their sense of belonging to what had become an accepted institution, i.e. the town, with a progressive shift of emphasis from the rural (as in Pre and Early Roman times) towards the urban context. On a micro-scale this attitude is reflected by the apparent emphasis on the reproduction of familial ties in burial. In spite of the difficulty of tracing genetic patterns in the early cemeteries especially in the context of the cremation burials and notwithstanding the limitations imposed by the nature of the available evidence, control by family custom over burial becomes more apparent during the IV century. For instance, early family groups have been tentatively identified in the cemeteries at Chichester and Verulamium (St Stephen's Hill) on the basis of clustering of graves or the presence of multiple burials. Similarly, cemetery sites such as Skeleton Green (Braughing) have been interpreted as private burial grounds for one or more selected family *nuclei*. It is however in the context of the late inhumation cemeteries that the evidence for family groups becomes more visible in terms of genetic and/or ritual affinities. In particular, there is evidence for families being buried at Butt Road (Colchester), Poundbury (Dorchester), Verulam Hills Field (Verulamium), Lankhills (Winchester) and, possibly, at London (Eastern Cemetery), Gloucester (Kingsholm Road and Parry Lodge Site), Dorchester on Thames and Ilchester with the cemetery at Kelvedon (Area J) being interpreted as the burial ground for one or more (selected?) families (see Ch. IV).

Watts has suggested a link between the appearance of family groups (including infant burials) and the diffusion of Christianity (Watts 1991, 38 ff., 62 ff.). Yet, evidence for the former in the context of non-Christian cemeteries (such as Lankhills at Winchester or Butt Road (period I-phase III) at Colchester) indicates that emphasis on family relationships in late Roman Britain was not an exclusive Christian trait.

The seeming appearance of family groups in the context of the late Romano-British cemeteries gives rise to a series of observations. *In primis*, although it is possible that the families who are represented in the cemeteries at Poundbury, Lankhills and to a certain extent Verulam Hills Field were reasonably well-off, for the majority of the groups buried in the late cemeteries it is difficult to say one way or the other. Furthermore, genetic traits apart, the means to emphasise family groups within a

cemetery (in terms of rites such as plastering, decapitation and orientation or character of the grave goods, when present, and burial markers) do not differ from those employed for apparently unrelated graves. This observation would conform with the evidence for uniformity in terms of general absence or relative scarcity of status indicators in the context of the late Romano-British cemeteries (above).

With reference to the social significance of the presence of family groups in the context of the late cemeteries, interpretations are open to speculation. What could be argued is that following the advent of the Romans the creation of the new settlement type, the town with its associated administrative functions, was about to disrupt some of the traditional forms of social behaviours and rituals (5). The process of change does not appear to have been sudden as suggested, for example, by the continuation of the tradition of wealthy cremation burials in rural locations in the South East. In some cases, material distance from the place of origin would have caused social exclusion and control by family custom over certain practices such as burial would have been weakened and partly replaced by the 'laws' of the new-comers. The apparent emergence of family groups in the later cemeteries may imply that by the IV century the traditional ties which had been disrupted by the introduction of the Roman urban style of life were re-established in the very context of the Roman town, with a progressive shift of emphasis from the countryside (6). Last but not least, the presence of family groups seems to stand against the idea of an overwhelming control exerted by specific authorities (whether religious or civilian) for ritual fervour would have been channelled to more overtly expressed forms of public (as opposed to private) cults.

## **VI.7 CONCLUSION: UNIFORMITY AND ROMANISATION**

This work has presented a massive array of data, synthesis and related interpretations. Far from claiming to answer all the questions which arose in the course of the present analysis, the purpose has been to give an example of interpretation concerning the phenomenon of the 'managed cemeteries' of the IV century. There is the need for further extensive excavations in both rural and urban contexts, for the study of the Romano-British cemeteries still suffers from a series of problems, and limitations are posed by the uneven quality, quantity and geographical distribution of the available evidence.

Above all, difficulties arise when attempting to deal with the wider question concerning the Romanisation of Britain and the continuation of native traditions. From my analysis conducted above it is apparent that uniformity was the end-result

of a process of slow cultural amalgamation and not a passive reception of external cultural trends: Romanization, however uniform on the surface, was the result of processes operating essentially at a localised level which provoked different responses, and responses varied according to the pace and degree of change. When analyses are conducted at a provincial level there is the risk of overlooking general trends and underestimating a variety of more subtle underlying patterns. Notwithstanding the danger of failing to distinguish between those changes set in motion by the conquest and those which merely represent the continuation of existing trends, even within a self-contained (and peripheral) province such as Britain the form and degree of change varied between different groups and areas, depending on such factors as pre-existing social organisation, the intensity of pre-Conquest contacts, the physical environment and so on. The composite character of the early cemeteries seems to conform to this pattern: general similarities (as in the adoption of the practice of urned cremations in formal cemeteries) are shared in common but distinctions also emerge between groups, and within groups, between kin and families as an indication of the fragmentation of the local, i.e. rural society. At the same time, the developments shown by the changes in material culture were the result of processes operating at a local as well as regional and inter-regional level, accounting for the widespread diffusion of general trends. In particular, the Roman conquest contributed towards a considerable modification in the location and internal organisation of the cemeteries as the result of a new policy of management of space in the context of rapid urban development and substantial transformation of the rural habitat .

By the advanced III century, Roman Britain started to reveal a high degree of autonomy in the context of some of the traditional forms of Roman cultural expression, especially in the "non-official" sphere (Ch. I). This even manifests itself in the creation of pottery kilns (in rural locations) for the production of fine ware, the foundation of mosaic 'schools', the proliferation of mid-size and large villas and town-houses in the course of the IV century. To this, the appearance of the late Romano-British cemeteries and associated burial rites might be added where the interaction between native trends and imported traditions may explain both the survival and amalgamation of certain customs and practices without implying that meanings remained necessarily static. This would extend from the mode of disposal of the dead in a more or less 'formal' fashion to the employment of markers for a specific burial or group of burials for members of the same family, from the grave furnishing to the degree of respects towards the mortal remains, etc. In the more general context of late Roman Britain within the Empire the tendency towards homogeneity and assimilation of current trends may reflect a higher degree of self-identification with the structure of the Empire. This may have been



reinforced but not necessarily caused by propagandistic political programmes or the diffusion of religious beliefs. At the same time a progressive shift occurred from the rural to the urban context in the representation of the traditional customs. This trend had been probably set in motion two centuries earlier to become more apparent during the IV century, the emphasis being placed on the continuity of native traditions as in the reproduction of kin, familial and group relationships, in the fully established Roman arena, the town (7). Hence, in the abstract, it was Romanisation that created the basis for the process of 'conceptual ruralisation of the town' and contributed towards the homogenisation of the substantial rural character of Britain which continued to dominate the British style of life as well as the funerary practices.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

(1) See the Railway Station Cemetery (RCHMY 1) and the Mount Cemetery (Dickinson & Wenham 1957).

(2) As seen in Chapter I, during the reign of Diocletian new emphasis was placed on the distinction between military and civilian with growing power of the *Equites* to the detriment of the traditional senatorial class. At the same time, from the reign of Diocletian onwards not only did the pyramid of power retain a flexible base: the reorganisation of the administration and the creation of a new elite of bureaucrats, civil servants and military officer together with technicians and scholars made society more fluid allowing for the development of a more private "provincial" talent. Local life meant that certain features of Roman culture could spread much further than before (Brown 1995, 34 ff.).

(3) From coin evidence and the distribution of finds, activities were concentrated inside the walls. This indicates that contraction started to occur at the edges of the towns, from the periphery to the core (Esmonde Cleary 1987, 197-200).

(4) According to Esmonde Cleary, the status of the late towns as places for burial had changed since the towns had become the place for social statement through lavish burials (Esmonde Cleary 1995, 34 ff.).

(5) This observation may also provide a partial explanation to the apparent absence of burials associated with villa-sites. Hingley (1989, 158) has observed that a villa 'represented the production of a symbol of the wealth of an individual or family group' and that, in some instances, 'it may have demonstrated the (final) dissolution of the traditional social ties'. It could be added that with the dissolution of the traditional social ties which had characterised the LPRIA rural communities, the towns became the favoured arena for the production of the new, Romanised, social persona.

(6) The social importance of the family in the later years of the Empire seems to have weakened (Swan 1984). At Poundbury for instance the presence of family plots was less apparent in the late phase of the cemetery (Molleson 1995). This observation would conform with the general evidence for decline in the standards of the cemeteries as the result of the relaxation of the Roman authority and the progressive decline of the urban settlements.

(7) It is interesting to notice that the emphasis placed by the Christian authors on the dichotomy between *humiliores* and *honestiores* seems to reflect, though not without a certain degree of bias, a situation brought about by increased tax pressure on the farmers and prevalence of private over

public interest among the major landowners. (See, for example, Salvianus who denounces the activity of the major landowners at the expenses of the impoverished ones) (Moreland 1993). It has been argued that in the Mediterranean areas by the end of the II century the growth of power in the hands of the landlords through control over larger areas of land and more tenants to the detriment of state integration created the basis for the growth of patronage. In entering into a patron-client relationship, former small property-holders were reduced to the status of tenants and the patron-client relationship came to replace kin, familial or group solidarity (Eisenstadt & Roniger 1980, 50, de Ste Croix 1983, 249-251, 454). For Britain, however, there is no evidence for the emergence of the *latifundium* as a widespread phenomenon, the only reference to major land-ownership being contained in the passage on the *Vita Melaniae* (see Ch I). As a whole, Britain appears to have been little touched by the changes which were affecting the late Roman society in other areas of the Empire.

## FUTURE WORK

The potential offered by the analysis of the cemeteries to throw light on aspects of continuity and change in the so-called 'Sub-Roman' and 'Early Anglo-Saxon' periods cannot be stressed enough, the study of material culture and genetic traits being of paramount importance for the definition of ethnic groups.

There is a debate over continuity or disruption of Romano-British culture following the withdrawal of the Roman army. Controversy stems primarily from problems attendant upon the definition of absolute chronologies.

The same applies to the study of the cemeteries. For instance, the evidence from the re-use of 'ancient' (i.e. prehistoric and Roman) monuments for later burial by Anglo-Saxon incomers emphasises the danger of assuming a direct link between spatial proximity and chronological continuity (see Ch. V, note 4).

Interpretational problems also emerge when trying to identify continuity of burial in cemeteries established *ex-novo* during the V-VI century. An example is provided by the site at Wasperton (Warwickshire), a small cemetery with late V-VII century Anglo-Saxon graves. Although many graves were unfurnished and undatable, at least 17 inhumations and 1 cremation displayed Roman characteristics in the deposition of hobnail boots and metal fittings, and in the occurrence of the practice of decapitation. A total of 82 inhumations and 20 cremations were accompanied by Anglo-Saxon objects. Variations also occurred in the orientation of the graves, the Roman inhumations being on either a north-south or a east-west alignment. Some of the Anglo-Saxon graves had disturbed (and were therefore later than) burials on a different alignment which were tentatively assigned to the Roman period. The interpretation of the cemetery as a whole is uncertain: it may have represented the burial ground of a British community which adopted Anglo-Saxon customs. Alternatively, 'Anglo-Saxon settlers recognised and adopted an abandoned Romano-British grave-field for their own use' (Welch 1992, 104-107).

At Norton (Cleveland) the preference for north-south orientation and the presence of crouched burials may indicate that at least half of the buried population was influenced by native traditions which cut across the boundaries of sex division or differences between furnished and unfurnished graves. The evidence would therefore point to the presence of a mixed population of Germanic speaking 'Anglians' and native Britons in the VI century (Sherlock & Welch 1992).

The two sites illustrated above provide examples of the kind of problems attendant upon the identification of ethnic groups (Brugmann 1997) and warn of the danger

of dismissing unusual graves or groups of them. The same problems are encountered when trying to identify Germanic elements in the Late Romano-British cemeteries.

As we have already seen in the course of the present work, there is evidence for 'intrusive' graves (as at Lankhills, Winchester, ch. III) which have been associated with foreign recruits stationed in Late Roman Britain. Their presence raises the wider question as to whether these foreign troops were soldiers-settlers and whether they left any tangible evidence in established Romano-British cemeteries (see Ch. I, note 28).

At a later stage, Anglo-Saxon migration consisted of a complex series of processes which started in the first half of the V century and were probably still active in the VI century. It has been suggested that mercenary troops originally hired by the British to protect the coasts from seaborne raiders later expanded 'carving out' their own territories and acquiring progressive autonomy (Welch 1992, 101-103).

With reference to the Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, there is a question that archaeologists have started to address which concerns aspects of cemetery organisation. Spatial analysis is fraught with difficulty and raises the wider problem as to whether there is evidence for management in Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and whether management may be of significance in relation to aspects of continuity and change within regional contexts, allowing for some degree of interaction between indigenous and imported practices.

Early Anglo-Saxon burial rites appear to have been regionally distributed, some resembling close similarities with former Romano-British practices, at least at a formal level. Both types of burial, i.e. cremation and inhumation, were concurrently practised, sometimes in the same cemetery.

Urned and unurned cremations were accompanied by burnt objects (e.g. toilet implements) and animal bones. The cremated remains were often selected. The presence of bones from different bodies in the same urn may indicate that the pyres were re-used for the cremation of several individuals.

The inhumations were generally supine and extended, with rare instances of crouched postures, together with prone and decapitated burials, possibly deriving from the local Romano-British tradition. A wide range of alignments seems to have occurred, often in the same cemetery [Finglesham in Kent, VI-VII century (Hawkes 1976)], where burials could be arranged in rows or clusters, or were located in spatial isolation. In some cases, the grave-pits were left empty or were too small for the body, suggesting that they may have been pre-planned and dug when the soil was still moist before winter set in. The graves were lined with stones

and wooden planks, and the bodies accompanied by the deposition of vessels and pots, food offerings, worn and unworn metal dress-fittings (namely brooches) in female graves, and weapons or more commonly buckles and domestic knives in male graves.

Grave markers appear to have been frequently employed: earth mounds, single poles, posted structures and ring ditches have been found in association with both inhumation and cremation burials [Apple Down cemetery 1 in West Sussex, late V-VII century (Down & Welch 1990); St Peter's Broadstairs in Kent, VII century (Welch 1992)].

Many cemeteries have provided evidence for spatial groupings. In some instances, simple proximity of the burials, variations in the orientation of the graves, composition of the grave-goods and body postures have been observed. These variations have been interpreted as representing cemetery sequences [Buckland cemetery in Kent, late V-mid VIII century (Evison 1987); Apple Down cemetery 1, above; Sponge Hill in Norfolk, V-VI century (Hills *et al.* 1987)], kinship relations [Barrington Cemetery A in Cambridgeshire, VI-VII century (Malim & Hines 1998)] and gender division [Westgart Gardens, Suffolk, VI century (West 1988)].

As in Roman-Britain, the Anglo-Saxon cemeteries seem to display a progressive tendency towards uniformity in the form of findless graves, east-west orientation, and occasional elaborate grave markers. The trend may indicate that the organisation of the burial grounds was progressively subjected to some form of official policy, possibly under the influence of a Christian rationale, following the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons in the VII century, and in concomitance with the consolidation of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. *Contra*, variations in the early cemeteries would suggest that prior to the VIII century burial organisation was predominantly familial, with social status, ritual preference, age and gender differentiation playing a major role within more fragmented and regionally varied groups of people.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC ABBREVIATIONS

AA4	Archaeologia Aeliana (4th series)
AA5	Archaeologia Aeliana (5th series)
Antiq J	Antiquaries Journal
Archaeol J	Archaeological Journal
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
CA	Current Archaeology
CBA	Council for British Archaeology
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
JBAA	Journal of the British Archaeological Association
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
LACTOR	London Association of Classical Teachers
Oxon	Oxoniensia
PDNHAS	Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society
PHFCAS	Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society
PPS	Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society
PSA	Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London.
PSANHS	Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society
PSIA	Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology
RCHME	The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England
RIB	Roman Inscriptions of Britain (Collingwood, R.G. & Wright, R.P. 1965)
TBGAS	Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
TBWAS	Transactions of the Birmingham & Warwickshire Archaeological Society
TEAS	Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society
TLMAS	Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society
TStAAS	Transactions of the St Albans Architectural and Archaeological Society
TStAEHAAS	Transactions of the St Albans and East Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society.
YAJ	Yorkshire Archaeological Journal

**Addyman, P. & Black, V.** (eds.) 1984. *Archaeological Papers from York Presented to M.W. Barley*. York.

**Alexander, J. et al.** 1969. *Excavations in Cambridge 1969. A Preliminary Report on Excavations at Arbury Road*. Board of Extra-mural Studies (Cambs.) & Department of Extra-mural Studies (London).

**Anthony, I. E.** 1968. 'Excavations in Verulam Hills Field, St. Albans 1963-4'. *Herts. Archeol.* 1: 9-50.

**Applebaum, S.** 1972. 'Roman Britain'. H.P.R. Finberg (ed.) 1972. Vol. 1, pt. 2: 3-282.

**Arnold, C. J.** 1984, *Roman Britain to Saxon England*. Croom Helm.

**Atkin, M.** 1987. *Found at Richard Cound. The Kingsholm Dig*. Gloucester.

**Atkin, M.** 1988. '76 Kingsholm Road, SO83501939, Site 20/87'. *Glevensis* 22 (1988): 16-21.

**Atkinson, R.J.C.** 1952-1953. 'Excavations in Barrow Hills Field, Radley, Bercks. 1944-1945'. *Oxon.* 17-18 (1952-53): 14-35.

**Baldwin, R.** 1985. 'Intrusive Burial Groups in the Late Romano-British Cemetery at Lankhills'. *Oxford J Archaeology* 4 (1) (1985): 93-104.

**Barber, B., Bowsher, D., Whittaker, K.** 1990. 'Recent Excavation of a Cemetery at Londinium'. *Britannia* XXI: 1-12.

- Barley, M. W.** 1964. 'Ancaster, Causennae'. *East Midlands Arch. Bull.* 7 (1964): 9.
- Barley, M.W., May, J., Todd, M., Wilson, D.R.** 1974. 'Ancaster, Miscellaneous Excavations'. *East Midlands Arch. Bull.* 10 (1974): 16-17.
- Barley, M.W. & Hanson, R.P.C.** (eds.) 1968. *Christianity in Roman Britain 300-700*. Leicester University Press.
- Bassett, S.** (ed.), 1995. *Death in Town. Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead 100-1600 AD*. London & New York. First Published 1992.
- Biddle, M.** 1976. 'Towns'. D.M.Wilson (ed.) 1976: 99-150.
- Bintliff, J.** (ed.) 1984. *European Social Evolution*. University of Bradford.
- Birley, A.** 1988. *The People of Roman Britain*. 2nd edn. London.
- Birley, E.** 1977. *Vindolanda*. London.
- Black, E. W.** 1986. 'Romano-British Burial Customs and Religious Beliefs in South-East England'. *Archeol. J.* 143 (1986): 201-239.
- Blagg, T.F.C.** 1990. 'Architectural Munificence in Britain. The Evidence of Inscriptions'. *Britannia XXI* (1990): 13-31.
- Blagg, T.F.C. & King, A.C.** (eds.). *Military and Civilian in Roman Britain: Cultural Relationships in a Frontier Province*. BAR British Series 136 (1984).
- Blume, F. Et Al.** 1848. *Die Schriften der Romischen Feld-Messer (Gromatici Veteres)*. 2 vols.: I text, Lachmann; II Erlaute Rungen, Berlin.
- Boon, G.C.** 1957. *Roman Silchester*. London.
- Boon, G.C.** 1983. 'The Romano-British Domestic Shrine'. B. Hartley & J. Wachter (eds.) 1983: 33-55.
- Branigan, K.** 1973. 'Gauls in Gloucestershire'. *TBGAS* 92 (1973): 82-95.
- Branigan, K.** 1977a. *The Roman Villa in South West England*. Bradford on Avon.
- Branigan, K.** 1977b. *Gatcombe. The Excavation and Study of a Romano-British Villa Estate*. BAR British Series 44 (1977). Oxford.
- Branigan, K.** 1980. *Roman Britain*. London Reader's Digest.
- Branigan, K.** 1985. *The Catuvellauni*. Gloucester.
- Branigan, K.** 1991. 'Mosaics in Roman Britain: Schools, Symbols and Service'. *Mosaics* 5 (1991): 9-14.
- Branigan, K.** (ed.) 1994a. *The Archaeology of the Chilterns*. Chess Valley Archaeological & Historical Society. Sheffield.
- Branigan, K.** 1994b. 'The Impact of Rome'. K. Branigan (ed.) 1994a: 94-117.
- Branigan, K. & Miles, D.** (eds.), 1988. *The Economy of Romano-British Villas*. Department of Archaeology & Prehistory, University of Sheffield.
- Brown, M.A.** 1983. 'Grave Orientation. A further Review'. *Archeol J* 140 (1983): 322-328.
- Brown, P.** 1995. *The World in Late Antiquity: AD 395-600*. London. First Published 1971.
- Brugmann, B.** 1997. 'Britons, Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Franks'. K. Parfitt & B. Brugmann (eds.) 1997: 110-118.
- Bruck, J.** 1995. 'A Place for the Dead: a Role of Human Remains in Late Bronze Age Britain'. *PPS* 61 (1995): 245-278.
- Bryant, S.** 1994. 'From Chieftdom to Kingdom'. K. Branigan (ed.) 1994a: 49-66.
- Burleigh, G.** 1982. 'Excavations at Baldock 1980-81: An Interim Report'. *Herts. Past* 12 (1982): 3-18.
- Burnham, B.C. & Johnson, H.B.** (eds.) 1979. *Invasion and Response: The Case of Roman Britain*. BAR British Series 73, i-ii (1979).
- Burnham, B.C. & Wachter, J.** 1990. *The Small Towns of Roman Britain*. London.
- Burton, G.** 1990: 'Government and the Provinces'. J. Wachter (ed.) 1990, Vol. I: 423-439.
- Cameron, A.** 1993. *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity: AD 395-600*. Routledge.



- Casey, J.** 1985. 'The Roman Housing Market'. F. Grew & B. Hobley (eds.) 1985: 43-48.
- Chambers, R.A.** 1976. 'A Romano British Settlement at Curbridge'. *Oxon.* 41 (1976): 38-55.
- Chambers, R.A.** 1987. 'The Late and Sub-Roman Cemetery at Queensford Farm, Dorchester on Thames, Oxon'. *Oxon.* 52: 35-69.
- Charlton, B. & Mitcheson, M.** 1984. 'The Roman Cemetery at Petty Knowes, Rochester, Northumberland'. *AA5*, 12 (1984): 1-31.
- Childe, V.G.** 1945. 'Directional Changes in Funerary Practices in 50,000 Years'. *Man* 4: 13-19.
- Clarke, G.** 1979. *Winchester Studies Three: Pre-Roman and Roman Winchester. Part II: The Roman Cemeteries at Lankhills.* University Press. Oxford.
- Clarke, G.** 1982. 'The Roman Villa at Woodchester'. *Britannia* 13: 197-228.
- Clifford, E.M.** 1931. 'A Prehistoric and Roman Site at Barnwood, near Gloucester'. *TBGAS* 52 (1931): 201-254.
- Cocks, A.H.** 1921. 'A Romano-British Homestead in the Hembeden Valley, Bucks'. *Archaeologia* 71 (1921): 141-198.
- Collingwood, R.G. & Wright, R.P.** 1965. *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain.* Oxford University Press.
- Collinson, J.** 1791. *The History and Antiquities of Somerset.* Bath.
- Collis, J.** 1968. 'Excavations at Owslebury, Hants: An Interim Report'. *Antiq J.* 48 (1968): 18-31.
- Colyer, C. & Gilmour, B.** 1978. 'St Paul in the Bail, Lincoln'. *CA* 63: 102-105.
- Couchman, C.** 1977. 'Excavations in Essex', 1976. *TEAS* 9 (1977):95-106.
- Crossan, C.** 1977. 'Colchester, Butt Road TL 993. 248'. C. Couchman 1977: 97.
- Crummy, N., Crummy, P. & Crossan, C.** 1993. *Colchester Archaeological Report 9: Excavations of Roman and later Cemeteries, Churches and Monastic Sites in Colchester 1971-1988.* Colchester Archaeological Trust.
- Crummy, P.** 1980. 'The Temples of Roman Colchester'. W. Rodwell (ed.): 243-283.
- Crummy, P.** 1984. *Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex.* Colchester Archaeological Report No 3, CBA & Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd.
- Crummy, P.** 1990. 'A Roman Church in Colchester'. *CA* 120 (1990): 406-8.
- Crummy, P.** 1993a. 'Excavations and Observations in the Ground of St. John's Abbey 1971-1985'. N. Crummy *et al.* 1993: 203-235.
- Crummy, P.** 1993b. 'Excavations at Maldon Road 1971'. N. Crummy *et al.* 1993: 236-244.
- Crummy, P.** 1993c. 'The Cemeteries of Roman Colchester'. N. Crummy *et al.* 1993: 257-275.
- Cunliffe, B. & Miles, D. (eds.)** 1984. *Aspects of the Iron Age in Southern-Central England.* Oxford.
- Dannell, G. & Wild, P.** 1969. 'Castor Normangate Field'. *Bull Northants Fed Archeol Soc* 3 (1969): 7-9.
- Dannell, G. & Wild, P.** 1971. 'Castor Normangate Field 1969-70'. *Bull Northants Fed Archeol Soc* 5 (1971): 7-15.
- Dannell, G. & Wild, P.** 1974. 'Castor Normangate Field 1973'. *Bull Northants Fed Archeol Soc* 9 (1974): 86-88.
- Dark, K. & Dark, P.** 1997. *The Landscape of Roman Britain.* Frome
- Davey, N.** 1935. 'The Romano-British Cemetery at St. Stephen's, near Verulamium'. *TStAEHAAS* IV (1935): 243-73.
- Davies, S. M., Stacey, L. C. & Woodward, P. J.** 1985. 'Excavations at Alington Avenue, Fordington, Dorchester 1984/5. Interim Report'. *PDNHAS* 107 (1985): 101-110.
- Dilke, O. A. W.** 1971. *The Roman Land Surveyors.* Newton Abbot.

- Dilke, O. A. W.** 1985: 'Ground Survey and Measurement in Roman Towns'. F. Grew & B. Hobley (eds.): 6-13.
- Dickinson, C. & Wenham, L. P.** 1957. 'Discoveries in the Roman Cemetery on the Mount, York'. *YAJ* 39: 283 ff.
- Dix, B.** 1983. 'Ashton Roman Town'. *South Midlands Arch.* 13 (1983): 18-20s.
- Dix, B.** 1984. 'Ashton Roman Town: Archaeological Rescue Excavation'. *Durobrivae* 9 (1984): 26-7.
- Dool, J.; Wheeler, H. Et AL.**, 1985. 'Roman Derby: Excavations 1968-1983'. *Derbyshire Archaeol J* 105 (1985).
- (Van) Dorselaer, A.** 1967. 'Les Necropoles d' Epoque Romaine en Gaule Septentrionale'. *Dissertationes Archaeologicae Gandenses* 10. Ghent.
- Down, A.** 1974. *Chichester Excavations*. Vol. III, Chichester Civic Society Excavations Committee.
- Down, A.** 1981. *Chichester Excavations*. Vol. V, Chichester Civic Society Excavations Committee.
- Down, A. & Rule, M.** 1971 *Chichester Excavation*. Vol. I. Chichester Civic Society Excavations Committee.
- Down, A. & Welch, M.** 1990. *Chichester Excavations 7: Apple Down and the Mardens*. Chichester.
- Duncan Jones, R.P.** 1985. 'Who Paid for Public Buildings in Roman Cities ?' F. Grew & B. Hobley (eds.) 1985: 28-33.
- Duval, N.** (ed) 1989. *Actes du XI Congres International d' Archeologie Chretienne* (CEFR 123, Studi di Antichita Cristiana 41). Vols I-III. Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, Citta del Vaticano.
- Eisenstadt, S. & Roniger, L.** 1980. 'Patron-Client Relations as a Model for Structuring Social Change'. *Comparative Studies in Society & History* 22: 42-77.
- Esmonde Cleary, A. S.** 1985. The Quick and the Dead: Suburbs, Cemeteries and the Towns. F. Grew & B. Hobley (eds.): 74-77.
- Esmonde Cleary, A. S.** 1987. *Extra-Mural Areas of Romano-British Towns*. BAR British Series 169 (1987). Oxford.
- Esmonde Cleary, A. S.** 1989. *The Ending of Roman Britain*. London.
- Esmonde Cleary, A. S.** 1993. 'Late Roman Towns in Britain and their Fate'. A. Vince (ed.) 1993: 6-13.
- Esmonde Cleary, A. S.** 1995. 'Town and Country in Roman Britain?'. S. Bassett (ed.), 1995: 28-42.
- Everton, R.F. & Leech, R.** 1981. 'The Burials'. R. Leech 1981: 195-205.
- Evison, V. I.** 1987. *Dover: the Buckland Anglo-Saxon Cemetery*. English Heritage Archaeological Report 3. London.
- Farrar, R.A.H.** 1957. 'Archaeological Fieldwork in Dorset: The Frampton Villa'. *PDNHAS* 78: 81-3.
- Farwell, D.E. & Molleson, I.I.** 1993. *Poundbury Vol. II. The Cemeteries*. Dorset Nat Hist Arch Soc. Monogr. Series 11.
- Finley, I.M.** 1973. *The Ancient Economy*. London.
- Finberg, H.P.R.** (ed.) 1972. *The Agricultural History of England*. Cambridge.
- Finch Smith, R.** 1987. *Roadside Settlement in Lowland Britain*. BAR British Series (1987).
- Fitzpatrick, A. P.** 1994. 'The Late Iron Age Cemetery at Westhampnett, West Sussex'. A. P. Fitzpatrick & E. L. Morris (eds.) 1994: 108-112.
- Fitzpatrick, A. P.** 1997. *Archaeological Excavations on the Route of the A 27 at Westhampnett By-pass, West Sussex, 1992. Volume 2: the Cemeteries*. Trust of Wessex Archaeology, Oxford.
- Fitzpatrick, A. P. & Morris, E. L.** (eds.) 1994. *The Iron Age in Wessex: Recent Work*. Wessex.
- Fletcher, E. & Meates, G.W.** 1969. 'The Ruined Church of Stone-by-Faversham'. *Antiq J* XLIX (1969): 273-94.
- Fletcher, E. & Meates, G.W.** 1977. 'The Ruined Church of Stone-by-Faversham: Second Report'. *Antiq J* LVII (1977): 67-72.

- Frend, W. H. C.** 1968. 'The Christianization of Roman Britain'. M. W. Barley & R. P. C. Hanson (eds.) 1968: 37-49.
- Frere, S.S.** 1984. 'Roman Britain in 1983. I. Sites Explored'. *Britannia* 15 (1984): 266-332.
- Frere, S.S.** 1985. 'Roman Britain in 1984. I. Sites Explored'. *Britannia* 16 (1985): 252-316.
- Frere, S.S.** 1991. *Britannia. A History of Roman Britain*. 3rd edn Extensively Revisited. Pimlico Edition 1991.
- Fulford, M.** 1989. 'The Economy of Roman Britain'. M. Todd (ed.) 1989: 175-201.
- Fulford, M.** 1991. Britain and the Roman Empire: 'The Evidence for Regional and Long-Distance Trade'. R. Jones (ed.) 1991.
- Garrod, A.P.** 1984. 'Gambier Parry Lodge Estate, Tewkesbury Road, near Kingsholm, Gloucester'. *Glevensis* 18 (1984): 49-51.
- Garrod, A.P. & Heighway, C.M.** 1984. *Garrod's Gloucester*. Western Archaeological Trust, Gloucester.
- Garwood, P.** *Et Al.* (eds.) 1991. *Sacred and Profane*. Oxford Committee for Archaeology, Oxford.
- Gillam, J.P. & Daniels, C.H.** 1961. 'The Roman Mausoleum on Shorden Brae, Beaufront, Corbridge, Northumberland'. *AA4 XXIX* (1961): 37-61.
- Gonzales, J.** 1986. 'The Lex Imitana: a New Copy of the Flavian Municipal Law'. *JRS* 76 (1986): 147-243.
- Goodburn, R.** 1976. 'Roman Britain in 1975. I. Sites Explored'. *Britannia* 7 (1976): 291-377.
- Goodburn, R.** 1978. 'Roman Britain in 1977. I. Sites Explored'. *Britannia* 9 (1978): 403-472.
- Goodburn, R.** 1979a. 'Roman Britain in 1978. I. Sites Explored'. *Britannia* 10 (1979): 267-338.
- Goodburn, R.** 1979b. *The Roman Villa at Chedworth*. London Nat Trust.
- Gray, H. St. George** 1934. 'Roman Coffins found at Ilchester'. *PSANHS LXXIX*: 101-108.
- Green, C.J.S.** 1977. 'The Significance of Plaster Burials for the Recognition of Christian Cemeteries'. R. Reece (ed.) 1977a: 46-53.
- Green, C.J.S.** 1982. 'The Cemetery of a Romano-British Community at Poundbury, Dorchester, Dorset'. S.M. Pearce (ed.) 1982: 61-76.
- Green, C.J.S.** 1987. *Excavations at Poundbury. Vol. 1: The Settlement*. Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society. Monographic Series No 7.
- Green, C. J. S., Paterson, M. & Biek, L.** 1981. 'A Roman Coffin Burial from the Crown Building Site, Dorchester: with Particular Reference to the Head of Well Preserved Hair'. *PDNHAS* 103 (1981): 67-100.
- Greene, K.** 1986. *The Archaeology of the Roman Economy*. Batsford.
- Green, M.** 1976. *A Corpus of Religious Material from the Civilian Areas of Roman Britain*. BAR British Series 24, Oxford.
- Greenstock, M.C.** (ed.) 1971. 'Some Inscriptions from Roman Britain'. *LACTOR* 4 (1971), 2nd edn.
- Grew, F. & Hobley, B.** (eds.) 1985. *Roman Urban Topography in Britain and the Western Empire*. CBA Research Report 59.
- Guy, C.J.** 1977. 'The Lead Tank from Ashton'. *Durobrivae* 5 (1977): 10-11.
- Hadman, J.** 1984. 'Ashton 1979-82'. *Durobrivae* 9 (1984): 28-29.
- Hadman, J. & Upex, S.** 1975. 'The Roman Settlement at Ashton, near Oundle'. *Durobrivae* 3 (1975): 13-15.
- Hadman, J. & Upex, S.** 1977. 'Ashton 1976'. *Durobrivae* 5 (1977): 6-9.
- Hadman, J. & Upex, S.** 1979. 'Ashton 1977-78'. *Durobrivae* 7 (1979): 29-30.
- Hallam, S. J.** 1970. Settlement Round the Wash. C. W. Phillips (ed.) 1970: 22-113.
- Harman, M. Lambrick, G. Miles, D. & Rowley, T.** 1978. 'Roman Burials around Dorchester on Thames'. *Oxon* 43 (1978): 1-16.

- Harman, M.** 1987 'The Human Remains Excavated in 1981'. R. A. Chambers 1987: 60-62.
- Harries, J.** 1985. 'Death and the Dead in the Late Roman West'. S. Bassett (ed.) 1985: 56-67.
- Hartley, B.R. & Wachter, J.** (eds.) 1983. *Rome and her Northern Provinces. Papers presented to Sheppard Frere.* Gloucester.
- Hawkes, S. C.** 1976. 'Sunrise Dating of Death and Burial in an Anglo-Saxon Cemetery in East Kent'. *Archaeologia Cantiana* 92 (1976): 33-51.
- Heighway, C.M.** 1980. 'Roman Cemeteries in the Gloucester District'. *TBGAS* 98 (1980): 57-72.
- Higham, N.** 1992. *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons.* Seaby.
- Hill, C., Millett, M., Blagg & T. C. F.** 1980. *The Roman Riverside Wall and Monumental Arch in London.* London and Middlesex Archaeological Society Special Paper 3. London.
- Hills, C. et al.** (eds.) 1987. *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Sponge Hill, North Elmham.* East Anglian Archaeology Report 34 (1987).
- Hingley, R.** 1982. 'Roman Britain: the Structure of Roman Imperialism on the Development of a Peripheral Province'. D. Miles (ed.) 1982: 17-52.
- Hingley, R.** 1984. 'Towards Social Analysis in Archaeology. Celtic Society in the Iron Age of the Upper Thames Valley'. B. Cunliffe & D. Miles (eds. 1984): 72-88.
- Hingley, R.** 1989. *Rural Settlement in Roman Britain.* London.
- Hodder, I.** 1974. 'Some Marketing Models for Romano-British Coarse Pottery'. *Britannia* 5: 340-59.
- Hodder, I.** 1979. 'Pre-Roman and Romano-British Tribal Economy'. B.C. Burnham & H.B. Johnson (eds.): 189-96.
- Hodder, I.** (ed.) 1982. *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology.* Cambridge.
- Hodder, I. & Millett, M.** 1980. 'Romano-British Villas and Towns. A Systematic Analysis'. *World Archeol.* 12 (1980): 69-76.
- Hopkins, K.** 1983. *Death and Renewal.* Cambridge University Press.
- Hughes, H.V.** 1964. 'A Roman Cremation Burial from Alcester'. *TBWAS* 81 (1964): 139.
- Hull, M.R.** 1958. *Roman Colchester.* Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London n. 20. Oxford.
- Hurst, H. et al.,** 1975. Excavations at Gloucester. Third Interim Report: Kingsholm 1966-1975. *Antiq J* 55 (1975): 267-294.
- Hurst, H.** 1985. *Kingsholm.* Gloucester Archaeological Report, Vol. I. Gloucester Archaeological Publication Ltd.
- James, J.** 1984. 'Britain and the Late Roman Army'. T.F.C. Blagg & A.C. King (eds.) 1984: 164-189.
- Jessup, R.F.** 1959. 'Barrows and Walled Cemeteries in Roman Britain'. *JBAA* 3rd series, 22 (1958): 1-32.
- Johns, C.M. & Potter, T.W.** 1983. *The Thetford Treasure: Roman Jewellery and Silver.* London: British Museum.
- Johnson, S.** 1980. *Later Roman Britain.* Routledge.
- Jones, A. H. M.** 1964. *The Later Roman Empire.* Oxford.
- Jones, M.** 1989. 'Agriculture in Roman Britain: The Dynamics of Change'. M. Todd (ed.) 1989: 127-134.
- Jones, R.** 1975. 'The Romano-British Farmstead and its Cemetery at Lynch Farm, near Peterborough'. *Northants Archeol* 10 (1975): 94-137.
- Jones, R.** 1984. 'Social Evolution and the Western Provinces of the Empire'. J. Bintliff (ed.) 1984: 245-266.
- Jones, R.** 1981. 'Cremation and Inhumation Change in the III century'. A. King & M. Henig (eds.) 1981: 15-19.
- Jones, R.F.J.** 1984a. 'The Cemeteries of Roman York'. P. Addyman & V. Black (eds.) 1984: 34-42.
- Jones, R.F.J.** 1984b. 'Death and Distinction'. T.F.C. Blagg & A.C. King (eds.) 1984: 219-225.

- Jones, R.F.J.** 1991 (ed.). *Roman Britain Recent Trends*. Sheffield.
- Kendall, G.** 1982. 'A Study of Grave Orientation in Several Roman and Post-Roman Cemeteries from Southern Britain'. *Archeol. J.* 139 (1982): 101-123.
- Knight, W.F.J.** 1938. 'A Romano-British Site at Bloxham, Oxon'. *Oxon* 3 (1938): 41-56.
- Kjolbye-Biddle, B.** 1995. 'Dispersal or Concentration. The Disposal of the Winchester Dead over 2000 Years'. S. Bassett (ed) 1995: 210-247.
- Lana, I.** 1984 *Storia della Civiltà Letteraria di Roma e del Mondo Romano*. G. D'Anna. Firenze.
- Leach, P.** 1982. *Ilchester Vol. I. Excavations 1974-1975*. Western Arch. Trust. Excav. Monogr. 3. Bristol.
- Leach, P.** (ed) 1994a. *Ilchester Vol.II: Archaeological Excavations and Field Work to 1984*. Sheffield Excavation Report No. 2.
- Leach, P.** 1994b. 'Cemeteries. Northover: An Evaluation of the Late-Roman Cemetery 1982'. P. Leach (ed) 1984a: 91-102.
- Leech, R.** 1980. 'Religion and Burials in South Somerset and North Dorset'. W. Rodwell (ed) 1980a: 329-352.
- Leech, R.** 1981. 'The Excavation of a Romano-British Farmstead and Cemetery on Bradley Hill, Somerton, Somerset'. *Britannia* XII (1981): 177-252.
- Leech, R.** (ed) 1982. *Excavation at Catsgore 1970-1973: A Romano-British Village*. Western Archaeological Trust, Excavation Monograph No 2, Bristol.
- Lewis, M.J.T.** 1966. *Temples in Roman Britain*. Cambridge.
- Lewis, N. & Reinhold, M.** 1966. *Roman Civilisation. Source-Book II: The Empire*. Harper Torchbook, New York.
- Liversidge, J.** 1973. *Britain in the Roman Empire*. Routledge
- Liversidge, J.** 1976. *Everyday Life in the Roman Empire*. London.
- Lowther, A.W.G.** 1937. 'Report on the Excavation of a Roman Structure at Rothemstead Experimental Station, Harpenden'. *TStAAAS*, V (1937): 22-23.
- Macdonald, J. L.** 1977. 'Pagan Religions and Burial Practices in Roman Britain'. R. Reece (ed) 1977a: 35-38.
- Macdonald, J.L.** 1979. 'Religion'. In G. Clarke 1979: 404-433.
- Mckinley, J.I.** 1989. 'Cremations: Expectations, Methodologies and Realities'. C.A. Roberts, F. Lea & J. Binliff (eds.) 1989.
- Mackreth, D.** 1987. 'Roman Public Buildings'. J. Schofield & R. Leech (eds.) 1987: 209-228.
- McWhirr, a. et al.** 1982. *Romano-British Cemeteries at Cirencester*. Cirencester Excavation Committee.
- Malim, T. & Hines J.** 1998. *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Edix Hill (Barrington A), Cambridgeshire*. CBA Research Report 112 (1998).
- Mann, J. C.** 1961. 'The Administration of Roman Britain'. *Antiquity* 35 (1961): 316-320.
- Mann, J. C. & Penman, R. G.** 1985. 'Literary Sources for Roman Britain'. *LACTOR* 11, 2nd edn.
- Mansuelli, G.** 1987. *L'Arte di Roma e del Mondo Romano*. Bologna.
- Matthews, C. L.** 1981. 'A Romano-British Inhumation Cemetery at Dunstable'. *Beds A J* 15 (1981).
- Meates, G.W.** 1955. *Lullingstone Roman Villa*. London.
- Meates, G.W.** 1979. *The Roman Villa at Lullingstone, Kent. Vol. I: The Site*. Kent Archaeological Society.
- Miles, D.** (ed) 1982. *The Romano-British Countryside: Studies in Rural Settlement and Economy*. BAR British Series 103 (1982). Oxford.
- Miles, D.** 1984. *Archaeology at Barton Court Farm, Abington, Oxon*. CBA Research Report 3 (1984), Oxford.
- Miles, D.** 1988. 'Villas and Variety: Aspects of Economy and Society in the Upper Thames Landscape'. K. Branigan & D. Miles (eds.) 1988: 60-72.
- Miles, D.** 1989. 'The Romano-British Countryside'. M. Todd (ed) 1989: 115-126.

- Millett, M.** 1986. 'An Early Roman Cemetery at Alton, Hants'. *PHFCAS* 42 (1986): 43-88.
- Millett, M.** 1987. 'An Early Roman Burial Tradition in Central Southern England'. *Oxford J Archaeology* 6 (1) (1987): 63-68.
- Millett, M.** 1990. *The Romanisation of Britain*. Cambridge.
- Milne, G.** 1985. *The Port of Roman London*. London.
- Moir, J.R. & Maynard, G.** 1933. 'The Roman Villa at Castle Hill, Whitton, Ipswich'. *PSIA* 21 (1933): 240-262.
- Molleson, T.A.** 1995. 'Mortality Patterns in the Romano-British Cemetery at Poundbury Camp, near Dorchester'. S. Bassett (ed.), 1995: 43-55.
- Momigliano, A.** 1966. *Terzo Contributo alla Storia degli Studi Classici e del Mondo Antico*. Tomo I. Roma.
- Moreland, J.** 1993. 'Wilderness, Wasteland, Depopulation and the End of the Roman Empire?' *The Accordia Research Papers*. Vol. 4: 89-110.
- Morris, J. R.** 1968. 'The Date of St. Alban'. *Herts. Arch.* 1: 1-8.
- Morris, J. R. & Roxan, J.** 1980. 'Churches on Roman Buildings'. W. Rodwell (ed.) 1980a: 175-209.
- Neal, D.** 1984. 'A Sanctuary at Wood Lane End, Hemel Hempstead'. *Britannia* XV (1984): 193-216.
- Neal, D.** 1987. 'Stanwick'. *CA* 106: 334-336.
- Neal, D., Wardle, A. & Huhn, J.** 1990. *Excavation of the Iron Age, Roman and Medieval Settlement at Gorhambury, St. Albans*. London
- Nenquin, J.** 1953. 'La Necropole de Furfooz'. *Dissertationes Archaeologicae Gandenses* 1 (1953). Ghent
- Niblett, R.** 1990. 'Verulamium'. *CA* 120 (1990): 410-17.
- Niblett, R.** 1994. 'Verulamium: The Evolution of a Chiltern Town'. K. Branigan (ed.), 1994a: 67-93.
- Nock, A. D.** 1932. 'Cremation and Burial in the Roman World'. *Harvard Theol. Review*. 25 (1932): 321-367.
- O'Neil, H.E.** 1945. 'The Roman Villa at Park Street near St Albans, Herts. Reports on the Excavations of 1943-45'. *Archeol J* 102 (1945): 21-110.
- Owen, E. J.** 1992. *The City in the Greek and Roman World*. Routledge.
- Painter, K.S.** 1968. 'The Roman Villa at Hinton St Mary, Dorset'. *Brit Mus Quarterly* 32 (1968): 15-31.
- Painter, K.S.** 1971. 'Villas and Christianity in Roman Britain'. *British Mus. Quarterly* 35: 156-75.
- Painter, K.S.** 1977. *The Water Newton Early Christian Silver*. British Museum.
- Parfitt, K. & Bruggmann, B.** 1997. *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery on Mill Hill, Deal, Kent*. The Society for Medieval Archaeology. Monographic Series 14.
- Parker Pearson, M.** 1982. 'Mortuary Practices, Society and Ideology. An Ethnoarchaeological Study'. I. Hodder (ed.) 1982: 99-113.
- Parker Pearson, M.** 1993. 'The Powerful Dead: Archaeological Relationships between the Living and the Dead'. *Cambridge Archaeol J* 3 (2) (1993): 20-229.
- Parrington, M.** 1978. *Excavation of an Iron Age Settlement, Bronze Age Ring Ditches and Roman Features at Ashville Trading Centre, Abingdon (Oxfordshire) 1974-76*. Oxford Archaeological Unit CBA.
- Partridge, C.** 1975. 'Braughing'. W. Rodwell & T. Rowley (eds.) 1975: 139-57.
- Partridge, C.** 1977. 'Excavation and Fieldwork at Braughing 1968-73'. *Herts Archaeol* 5 (1977): 22-108.
- Partridge, C.** 1981. *Skeleton Green: a Late Iron Age and Romano-British Site*. Britannia Monograph Series No 2. Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies. London
- Patterson, J.R.** 1995. 'Patronage, Collegia and Burial in Imperial Rome'. S. Bassett (ed.) 1995: 15-27.
- Peacock, D.P.S.** 1982. *Pottery in the Roman World: an Ethnoarchaeological Approach*. Longman. London & New York.

- Pearce, S.M.** (ed). *The Early Church in Western Britain and Ireland*. BAR British Series 102 (1982).
- Percival, J.** 1976. *The Roman Villa. An Historical Introduction*. London
- Perinetti, R.** 1989. N. Duval (ed.) *Actes du XI Congres International d'Archeologie Cretienne*. Voll. I-III. Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, Citta del Vaticano. 1989.
- Phillips, G. W.** (ed) 1970. *The Fenland in Roman Times. Studies of a Major Area of Peasant Colonisation*. London
- Philp, B.J.** 1969. 'The Excavation of the Roman Cemetery at Keston'. *CA* 14 (May 1969): 73-75.
- Philp, B.J. et al.** 1991. *The Roman Villa Site at Keston (Kent). First Report: Excavations 1968-1978*. Kent
- Philpott, R.** 1991. *Burial Practices in Roman Britain. A Survey of Grave Treatment and Furnishing*. BAR British Series 219 (1991). Oxford
- Piganiol, A.** 1962. 'Les Documentes Cadastraux d'Orange'. *Gallia* (1962), Supplement 16.
- Rahtz, P.A.** 1977. Late Roman Cemeteries and beyond. R. Reece (ed.) 1977a: 53-64.
- Rahtz, P.A.** 1978. 'Grave Orientation'. *Archeol. J.* 135 (1978): 1-14.
- Rankov, N.B.** 1982. 'Roman Britain in 1981: Sites Explored'. *Britannia* XIII (1982): 328-395.
- RCHME** 1962. *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the City of York, 1: Eburacum Roman York*. HMSO, London.
- Reece, R.** 1962. 'The Oakley Cottage Romano-British Cemetery'. *TBGAS* 81(1962): 51-72.
- Reece, R.** (ed.) 1977a. *Burial in the Roman World*. CBA research Report 22, London.
- Reece, R.** 1977b. 'Burial in Latin Literature: Two examples'. R. Reece (ed.) 1977a: 44-45.
- Reece, R.** 1980. 'Town and Country. The End of Roman Britain'. *World Archaeology* 12 (1980): 77-92.
- Reece, R.** 1982a. 'The Coins'. A. Mc Whirr *et al.* (eds.) 1982: 126-128.
- Reece, R.** 1982b. 'Bones, Bodies and Disease'. *Oxford J. Archaeol* 1: 347-358.
- Reece, R.** 1984. 'Mints, Markets and the Military'. T. F. C. Blagg & A. C. King (eds.) 1984: 143-160
- Reece, R.** 1989. 'The Coins'. I.M Stead & V. Rigby 1989.
- Rivet, A.L.F.** 1966. 'Summing-up some Historical Aspects of the *Civitates* of Roman Britain'. J. Wachter (ed.) 1966: 101-110.
- Rivet, A.L.F.**(ed), 1969. *The Roman Villa in Britain*. London.
- Roberts, C.A., F. Lea & Bintliff, J.** (eds.) 1989. *Burial Archaeology. Current Research, Methods and Developments*. BAR British Series 211 (1989).
- Rodwell, W.** 1975. 'Milestones, Civic Territories and the Antonine Itinerary'. *Britannia* VI (1975): 76-101.
- Rodwell, K. A.** 1987. *The Prehistoric and Roman Settlement at Kelvedon, Essex*. CBA Research Report 63. London.
- Rodwell, K. & Rodwell, W.** 1975. 'Kelvedon'. *CA* 48 (1975): 25-30.
- Rodwell, W.** (ed.) 1980a. *Temples, Churches and Religion in Roman Britain. Recent Research in Roman Britain*. BAR British Series 77 i-ii (1980). Oxford.
- Rodwell, W.** 1980b. 'Temple Archaeology: Problems of the Present and Patterns for the Future'. W. Rodwell (ed.) 1980a: 211-241.
- Rodwell, W. & Rowley, T.** (eds.) 1975. *The Small Towns of Roman Britain*. BAR British Series 15 (1975).
- Rook, A.G.** 1973. 'Excavation at the Grange Romano-British Cemetery, Welwyn 1967'. *Herts Arch* 3 (1973): 1-30.
- Rook, A.G. et al.** 1984. 'A Roman Mausoleum and Associated Marble Sarcophagus and Burials from Welwyn, Herts'. *Britannia* XV (1984): 143-162.
- Ruggini, L. C.** 1984. 'I Romani e i "Barbari": Mille Anni di Storia nella Storia di un' Idea'. I. Lana 1984: LXXXII-XCII

- St. George-Grey, H.** 1934. 'Roman Coffins found at Ilchester'. *PSANHS* 79 (1934): 101-108.
- Salway, P.** 1985. *Roman Britain*. The Oxford History of Britain, Oxford.
- Schofield, J. & Leech, R.** (eds.) 1987. *Urban Archaeology in Britain*. London.
- Scott, E.** 1991. 'Animal and Infant Burials in Romano-British Villas: a Revitalisation Movement'. P. Garwood *et al.* (eds.) 1991: 115-121.
- Selrik, A. & Selrik, W.** 1983. 'Baldock'. *CA* 86 (1983): 70-74.
- Shaw, R.** 1987. *The Roman Town at Ashton*. Resource Pack. Archaeology in Education. Northamptonshire County Council.
- Sherlock, S. J. & Welch, M. G.** 1992. *An Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Norton, Cleveland*. CBA Research Report 82 (1992).
- Shimmin, D.** 1993. 'Excavation at No 42 Crouch Street, Colchester 1988'. N. Crummy *et al.* (eds.) 1993: 245-256.
- Smith, J.T.** 1983. 'Flight of Capital or Flight of Fancy?' *Oxford J Archeol* 2 (2) 1983: 239-46.
- Smith, R. A.** 1907. 'The Wreck at Pudding Pan Rock, Heme Bay, Kent'. *PSA* 21 (1907): 268-292.
- Startin, D. W. A.** 1981. 'Excavations at the Old Vicarage, Fordington, Dorchester, Dorset, 1971'. *PDNHAS* 103 (1981): 43-66.
- De Ste Croix, G.E.M.** 1983. *The Class Struggles in the Ancient Greek World*. Duckworth. London.
- Stead, I.M.** 1969. 'Verulamium' 1966-68. *Antiquity*. 43 (1969): 45-52.
- Stead, I.M.** 1970. *Rudston Roman Villa*. Yorkshire Archaeol Soc.
- Stead, I.M.** 1976. *Excavations at Winterton Roman Villa and Other Roman Sites in North Lincolnshire*. Department of Environment Archaeological Report 9.
- Stead, I.M.** 1980. *Rudston Roman Villa*. Yorkshire Archaeol. Soc.
- Stead, I.M. & Rigby, V.** 1986. *Baldock. The Excavation of a Roman and Pre-Roman Settlement 1968-72*. Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, London.
- Stead, I.M. & Rigby, V.** 1989. *Verulamium: King Harry Lane Site*. English Heritage Archaeol. Report 12 (1989).
- Stephens, G. R.** 1987. 'A Note on the Martyrdom of St. Alban'. *Herts Arch.* 9 (1983-1986): 20-21.
- Stevens, C.E.** 1951. 'The Roman Name of Ilchester'. *Som Archaeol Nat Hist Soc* 96 (1952): 188-92.
- Stukeley, W.** 1724. *Itinerarium Curiosum*.. London.
- Swan, D.B.** 1984. 'Latin Funerary Epigraphy and Family Relations in the Later Empire'. *Historica* XXXIII (1984): 457-97.
- Thomas, C.** 1981. *Christianity in Roman Britain to AD 500*. London.
- Todd, M.** 1975. 'Margidunum and Ancaster'. W. Rodwell & T. Rowley (eds.) 1975: 211-225.
- Todd, M.** 1988. 'Villa and Fundus.' K. Branigan & D. Miles (eds.) 1988: 14-20.
- Todd, M.** (ed.) 1989. *Research on Roman Britain 1960-1989*. Britannia Monographic Series 11.
- Toynbee, J.M.C.** 1971. *Death and Burial in the Roman World*. Thames and Hudson. London.
- Van Dam, R.** 1985. *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul*. University of California Press.
- Vince, A.** (ed.) 1993. *Pre-Viking Lindsey*. Lincoln Archaeological Studies No 1.
- Wacher, J.** (ed.) 1966. *The Civitas Capitals of Roman Britain*. Leicester.
- Wacher, J.** 1975. *The Towns of Roman Britain*. London.
- Wacher, J.** (ed.) 1990. *The Roman World*. Vols I-II. First Published 1987, Routledge.
- Wait, G.A.** 1985. *Ritual and Religion in Iron Age Britain*. BAR British Series 149 i-ii (1985).
- Ward Perkins, J. B.** 1954. 'Constantine and the Origins of the Christian Basilica'. *Papers Brit. School Rome*, 22: 69-60.



- Watkin, W.T.** 1886. *Roman Cheshire*. Privately Printed. Liverpool.
- Watts, D.** 1991. *Christians and Pagans in Roman Britain*. London.
- Watts, D.** 1993a. *The Pagan Revival in Roman Britain*. Paper Presented at the Conference Religion in the Ancient World, University of New England, Armidale, July 1993.
- Watts, D.** 1993b. 'An Assessment of the Evidence for Christianity at the Butt Road site'. N. Crummy *et al.* 1993.
- Webster, G.** 1969. 'The Future of Villa Studies'. A.L.F. Rivet (ed.), 1969: 217-249.
- Welch, M.** 1992. *Anglo-Saxon England*. English Heritage.
- Wells, C.** 1962. 'Description of Human Remains'. R. Reece 1962: 60-72.
- Wells, C.** 1968. 'General Observations on the Skeletal Analysis'. I. E. Anthony 1968: 40-42.
- Wells, C.** 1981. 'Report on Three Series of Cremations and Four Inhumations from Skeleton Green'. C. Partridge 1981: 277-304.
- Wells, C.** 1982. 'The Human Burials'. A. D. Mc Whirr *et al.* 1982: 135-202.
- Wenham L. P.** 1968. *The Romano-British Cemetery at Trentholme Drive, York*. London.
- West, S. E.** 1998. *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Westgart Gardens, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk: Catalogue*. East Anglian Archaeology Report 38 (1998).
- Wheeler, H.** 1985. 'The Race Course Cemetery. J. Dool, H. Wheeler *et al.* 1985. Roman Derby: Excavations 1968-1983'. *Derbyshire Archaeol J* 105 (1985): 222-280.
- Whimster, R.** 1981. *Burial Practices in Iron Age Britain: A Discussion and Gazetteer of the Evidence c. 700 BC-AD 43*. BAR British Series 90 (i-ii) (1981).
- Whitwell, J.B., Todd, M., Ponsford, M. & Wilson, D.R.** 1966. 'Ancaster, Miscellaneous Excavations'. *East Midlands Arch. Bull.* 9 (1966): 10-13.
- Whytehead, R.** 1986. 'The Excavation of an Area within a Roman Cemetery at West Tenter Street, London E1'. *TLMAS* 37 (1986): 23-124.
- Wickham, M.** 1984. 'The Other Transition: From Late Antiquity to Feudalism'. *Past and Present* 103 (1984): 3-36.
- Wild, J. P.** 1973. 'The Roman Fishpond at Lynch farm'. *Durobrivae* 1 (1973): 10-21.
- Williams, H.** 1997. 'Ancient Landscapes and the Dead: the Reuse of Prehistoric and Roman Monuments as Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites'. *Medieval Archaeology* XLI (1997): 1-32.
- Williams, R.** 1984. 'Bancroft Mausoleum'. *South Midlands Archeol* 14 (1984). Newsletter CBA Regional Group 9: 21-26.
- Williams, R. & Zeepvat, R.J.** 1994. *Bancroft: A Late Bronze Age - Iron Age Settlement, Roman Villa and Temple-Mausoleum*. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph Series No 7, Vol. 1.
- Wilson, D.M.** (ed.) 1976. *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*. London.
- Wilson, D.R.** 1964. 'Roman Britain in 1963: Sites Explored'. *JRS* 54 (1964): 152-177.
- Wilson D. R.** 1968. 'An Early Christian Cemetery at Ancaster'. M.W. Barley & R.P.C. Hanson (eds.) 1968: 196-99.
- Wilson, D.R.** 1970. 'Roman Britain in 1969: Sites Explored'. *Britannia* 1 (1970): 268-305.
- Wilson, D. R. & May J.** 1965. 'Ancaster'. *East Midlands Arch. Bull.* 8 (1965): 13-14.
- Woodward, A.** 1992. *Shrines and Sacrifice*. Batsford Ltd, English Heritage, London.
- Woodward, P.** 1993. 'Discussion'. D.E. Farwell & I.I. Molleson 1993: 215-239
- Wrathmell, S. & Nicholson, A.** (eds.) 1990. *Dalton Parlour. An Iron Age Settlement and Roman Villa*. Wakefield.

## APPENDIX: MAIN LITERARY SOURCES FOR THE LATER ROMAN PERIOD

### \* Christian authors

#### OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS:

- *Codex Justinianus* (AD 529-34).
- *Codex Theodosianus* (Theodosius II, AD 438).
- Digest of Justinian (*Digesta seu Pandectae*, AD 533).
- Julianus Aemilianus (Publius Salvius Julianus Aemilianus), *Digesta* (II century, first half).
- *Notitia Dignitatum* (ca. AD 408).
- *Notitia Galliarum* (ca. AD 400).
- Pomponius (Sestus Pomponius), *Digesta* (II century, second half).
- Verona list (ca. AD 312-14).

#### HISTORIANS:

- Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum gestarum libri XXXVI* (covering the period between AD 353-378).
- Aurelius Victor, *Caesares* (from Augustus to Constans II [AD 360]).
- AAVV, *Panegyrici Latini Veteres* (in particular those for Constans, Maximianus, Constantinus, Julianus and Theodosius).
- Eutropius, *Breviarium ab urbe condita* (from the origin of Rome to Jovianus [364]).
- \* Orosius, *Historiae adversus paganos* (AD 417) (history from the origins of humanity to his times).
- *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* (from Hadrian [AD 117] to Numerianus [AD 284]).
- \* Sulpicius Severus, *Chronica* (ca. AD 400) (history from the origins of humanity to his times), *Dialogi*.

#### POETS AND RHETORICIANS

- \* Ambrosius, *De officiis ministrorum* (IV century, second half).
- \* Athanasius, *Vita Antonii* (Life of Saint Anthony [AD 365]).
- \* Augustinus (Aurelius Augustinus), *De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae, Confessiones* (late IV century).
- \* Ausonius, *Ordo nobilium urbium, Mosella* (IV century).
- \* Eusebius of Caesarea, *Historia Ecclesiastica* (IV century, first half).
- \* Jerolamus, *De viris illustribus* (AD 393), *Epistulae (Ad Corinthios, etc.)*, *Vulgata* (early V century).
- \* Lactantius (Lucius Cecilius Firmianus Lactantius) (?), *De mortibus persecutorum* (AD 318-321).
- \* Minucius Felix, *Octavius* (III century).
- \* Paulinus of Nola (IV century, second half).
- Rutilius Namatianus (Claudius Rutilius Namatianus), *De reditu suo* (IV century, first half).
- \* Salvianus, *De gubernatione Dei* (mid V century).
- \* Sidonius Apollinaris (Caius Sollius Modestus Sidonius Apollinaris), *Epistulae, Panegyrici* (IV-V century).
- \* Tertullianus (Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus), *Adversus Iudaeos* (early III century), *De resurrectione* (III century).

#### TECHNICAL WRITINGS

- AAVV, *Corpus agrimensorum (Gromatici)* (IV century with later additions).
- Anon., *De rebus bellicis* (IV century, second half).

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND PREHISTORY**

---

**THE CEMETERIES IN ROMAN BRITAIN**  
**EVIDENCE FOR MANAGEMENT AND RELATED SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS,**  
**WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE LATE ROMAN PERIOD**  
**(TABLES AND PLATES)**

**THESIS SUBMITTED BY:**  
**REBECCA CASA HATTON**  
**DEGREE OF PhD**

**DATE OF SUBMISSION: MARCH 1999**  
**YEAR OF ACCEPTANCE: 1999**

TABLE I

General details of the early cemeteries analysed in the course of the present work

## Cremation cemeteries

MAJOR TOWNS	STATUS	SITE	COUNTY	DATE OF EXCAV.	SITE CHRON.	N. BURIALS
CHICHESTER <i>Noviomagus</i>	<i>Civitas</i> capital	St Pancras	Sussex	1965	late I-II C.	260 c.; 9 i.
ST. ALBANS <i>Verulamium</i>	<i>Civitas</i> capital	St Stephen's Hill	Herts.	30's	I-II C.	400 c.; few i.
WINCHESTER <i>Venta Belgarum</i>	<i>Civitas</i> capital	Hyde Street	Hamps.	70's onwards	I-II C.	118c.; 99 i.

MINOR TOWNS/ FORTS	STATUS	SITE	COUNTY	DATE OF EXCAV.	SITE CHRON.	N BURIALS
BRAUGHING	n/a	Skeleton Green	Herts.	1971-72	mid-late II C.	54 c.; 5 i.
		Cemetery A		70's	I-mid/late II C.	7 c.; 0 i.
		Cemetery B		70's	II-III + C.	104 c.; 0 i.
HIGH ROCHESTER	n/a: early fort	Petty Knows	N. Humb	1975	II-III + C.	100 c. ?

## Cemeteries of mixed burial rite

MAJOR TOWNS	STATUS	SITE	COUNTY	DATE OF EXCAV.	SITE CHRON.	N BURIALS
CIRENCESTER <i>Corinium Dobunorum</i>	<i>Civitas</i> capital	Oakley Cottage	Glos.	60's	Late I-IV C.	9 i.; 46 c.
LONDON <i>Londinium</i>	<i>Civitas</i> capital	West Tenter St.	/	80's	II-IV C.	120 i.; 14 c.
		Eastern Cemetery		80's	II-IV C.	575 i.; 104 c.
ST ALBANS <i>Verulamium</i>	<i>Civitas</i> capital	King Harry Lane	Herts.	1966-68	II-IV C.	21.; ? c.
YORK <i>Eboracum</i>	<i>Civitas</i> capital	Trentholme Drive	Yorks.	50's	II-IV C.	350 i.; 53+ c.

MINOR TOWNS	STATUS	SITE	COUNTY	DATE OF EXCAV.	SITE CHRON.	N BURIALS
DERBY	n/a; early fort	Race Course	Derbys.	late 70's-80's	early II-IV C.	61 i.; 40 c.
KELVEDON	n/a	Area 'J'	Essex	1968-73	I-IV C.	9 i.; 35 c.

## Early inhumation cemeteries

MAJOR TOWN	STATUS	SITE	COUNTY	DATE OF EXCAV.	SITE CHRON.	N BURIALS
DORCHESTER (FORDINGTON) <i>Durnovaria</i>	<i>Civitas</i> capital	Alington Avenue	Dorset	1984-85	II-IV C.	60 i.; 4 c.
		Old Vicarage		1971	II-IV C.	20 i.; 3 c.

TABLE II

General details of the late inhumation cemeteries analysed in the course of the present work

MAJOR TOWNS	STATUS	SITE	COUNTY	DATE OF EXCAV.	SITE CHRON.	N. BURIALS
CIRENCESTER <i>Corinium Dobunorum</i>	<i>Civitas capital</i>	Bath Gate	Glos	60' s-70' s	late III-IV C.	435 i.; 3 c.
COLCHESTER <i>Camulodunum</i>	<i>Colonia</i>	Butt Road	Essex	70' s-80' s	IV C.	600 i.; 0 c.
DORCHESTER <i>Durnovaria</i>	<i>Civitas capital</i>	Poundbury Camp Crown Building	Dorset	70' s-80' s 1971	IV C. IV C.	114 + i.; 0 c. 'numerous'
GLOUCESTER <i>Nervia Glevensium</i>	<i>Colonia</i>	76, Kingsholm Rd. Gambier Parry Lodge	Glos.	late 70' s 80' s	late III-IV C. (II)-IV C.	58 i.; 0 c. 125 i.; 7 c.
ST. ALBANS <i>Verulamium</i>	<i>Civitas capital</i>	Verulam Hillsfield	Herts.	1963-64	late III-IV C.	15 i.; 0 c.
WINCHESTER <i>Venta Belgarum</i>	<i>Civitas capital</i>	Lankhills Victoria Road	Hamps.	70' s 70' s	IV C. IV C.	450 i.; 7 c. 125 i.; 4 c.

MINOR TOWNS	STATUS	SITE	COUNTY	DATE OF EXCAV.	SITE CHRON.	N BURIALS
ANCASTER	n/a	Ancaster	Lincs.	1964-69	IV C.	300 i.; 0 c.
ASHTON	n/a	'Formal cemetery'	Northants.	70' s-80' s	IV C.	200 i.; 0 c.
CANNINGTON	n/a	Cannington	Som.	60' s	IV C. and beyond	523 i.; 0 c.
DORCHESTER ON THAMES	n/a	Queensford Farm	Oxon	1972; 1981	late IV C.	164 i.; 0 c.
DUNSTABLE	n/a	Dunstable	Beds	1967-81	late IV C.	112 i.; 0 c.
ILCHESTER <i>Lindinis Durotrigum</i>	<i>Civitas capital ?</i>	Little Spittle Townsend Close Northover	Som	70' s 70' s XIX c. - 90's	late IV C. late IV C. late IV C.	43 i.; 0 c. 18 i.; 0 c. (?)

RURAL SITES	STATUS	SITE	COUNTY	DATE OF EXCAV.	SITE CHRON.	N BURIALS
BRADLEY HILL	n/a	Bradley Hill	Som.	1968-72	mid-late IV C.	50 i.; 0 c.
ORTON LONGEVILLE	n/a	Lynch Farm	Cambs.	1972	IV C.	50 i.; 1 c.

TABLE III

Location of the cemeteries analysed in the course of the present study

## Earlier cemeteries

SITES	RURAL	INDUSTRIAL	EX BUILT-UP	NO FORMER ACTIVITY	PRE-ROMAN CEMETERIES
Alington Avenue	•				
Derby Race Course		•			
Eastern Cemetery	•	•			
High Rochester <sup>1</sup>		•			
Hyde Street ?					
Kelvedon	•				
King Harry Lane			•		•
Oakley Cottage (?)					
Old Vicarage				•	
St Pancras <sup>1</sup>		•			
St Stephen's	•				
Skeleton Green			•		
Trentholme Drive				•	
West Tenter Street		•			

## Later cemeteries

SITES	RURAL	INDUSTRIAL	EX BUILT-UP	HOUSE PLOTS	EARLY CEMETERIES
Ancaster			•		
Ashton	•				
Ashton plots				•	
Bath Gate		•			
Butt Road	•				
Cannington		•			
Crown Building	• ?				
Dorchester on T.	•				
Dunstable		•			
Gambier Parry Lodge		•			•
76 Kingsholme Rd.		•	•		
Ilchester Northover	•				
Ilchester S cemetery <sup>2</sup>				•	
Lankhills	•				•
Poundbury Camp	•				•
Verulam Hills F.		•			•
Victoria Road	•				•

<sup>1</sup> At St Pancras and High Rochester there was also evidence for military activity

<sup>2</sup> The Southern cemetery includes the sites at Little Spittle, Townsend Close and Heavy Acre

TABLE IV

Internal features displayed by the cemeteries analysed in the present work

## Earlier cemeteries

SITES	WOODEN MARKERS	FUNERARY/CEMETERY ENCLOSURE <sup>1</sup>	MAUSOLEA	TRACKS/PATHS	FAMILY GROUPS	SHRINES
Alington Avenue						
Derby Race Course		•	•			
Eastern Cemetery	•					
High Rochester <sup>2</sup>	•		•			
Hyde Street	•		•	•		
Kelvedon	•	•	• later		•	
King Harry Lane						
Oakley Cottage						
Old Vicarage	•					
St Pancras	•				•	
St Stephens				• ?	•	
Skeleton Green		•			•	
Trentholme Drive						
West Tenter Street			•			

## Later cemeteries

SITES	WOODEN MARKERS	FUNERARY/CEMETERY ENCLOSURE <sup>1</sup>	MAUSOLEA	TRACKS/PATHS	FAMILY GROUPS	CHURCHES
Ancaster						
Ashton						
Ashton plots						
Bath Gate						
Butt Road I					•	
Butt Road II	•		• ?		•	•
Cannington			•	•	•	
Crown Building		•				
Dorchester on T.	•	•			•	
Dunstable		•				
Gambier Parry L <sup>3</sup>				•	•	
76 Kingsholme Rd					•	
Lankhills		•			•	
Ilchester S cemetery					•	
Northover		•	•			
Poundbury Main C.	•	•	•		•	
Poundbury Site 'C'		•				
Poundbury N&E C.			•			
Verulam Hills F.			•		•	•
Victoria Road					•	

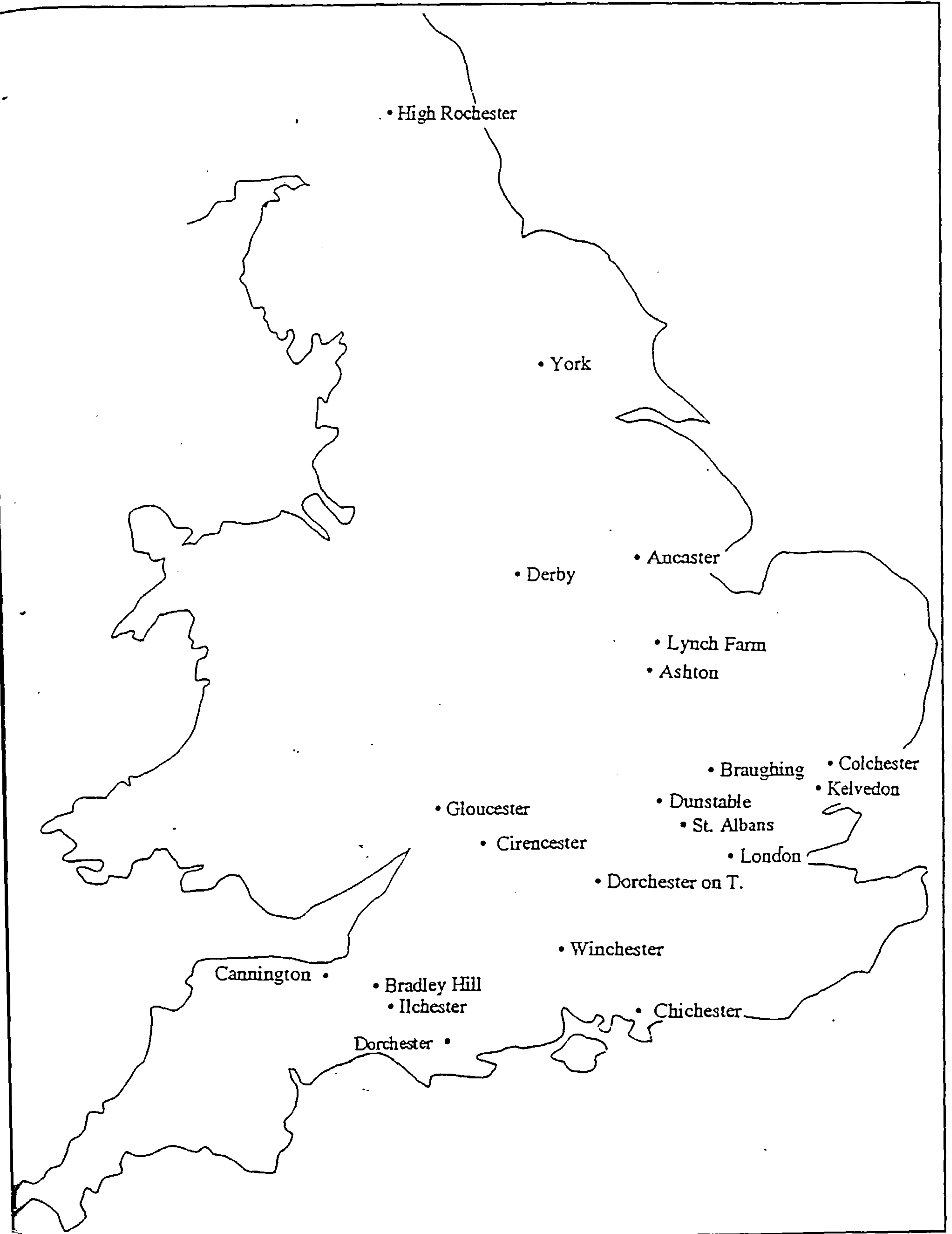
<sup>1</sup> Funerary enclosures refer to ditches around one or more centrally placed graves. Cemetery enclosures refer to purposefully built enclosures or to the (re-) employment of pre-existing ditches to enclose specific areas within a cemetery.

<sup>2</sup> The site at High Rochester was also characterised by the presence of barrow mounds.

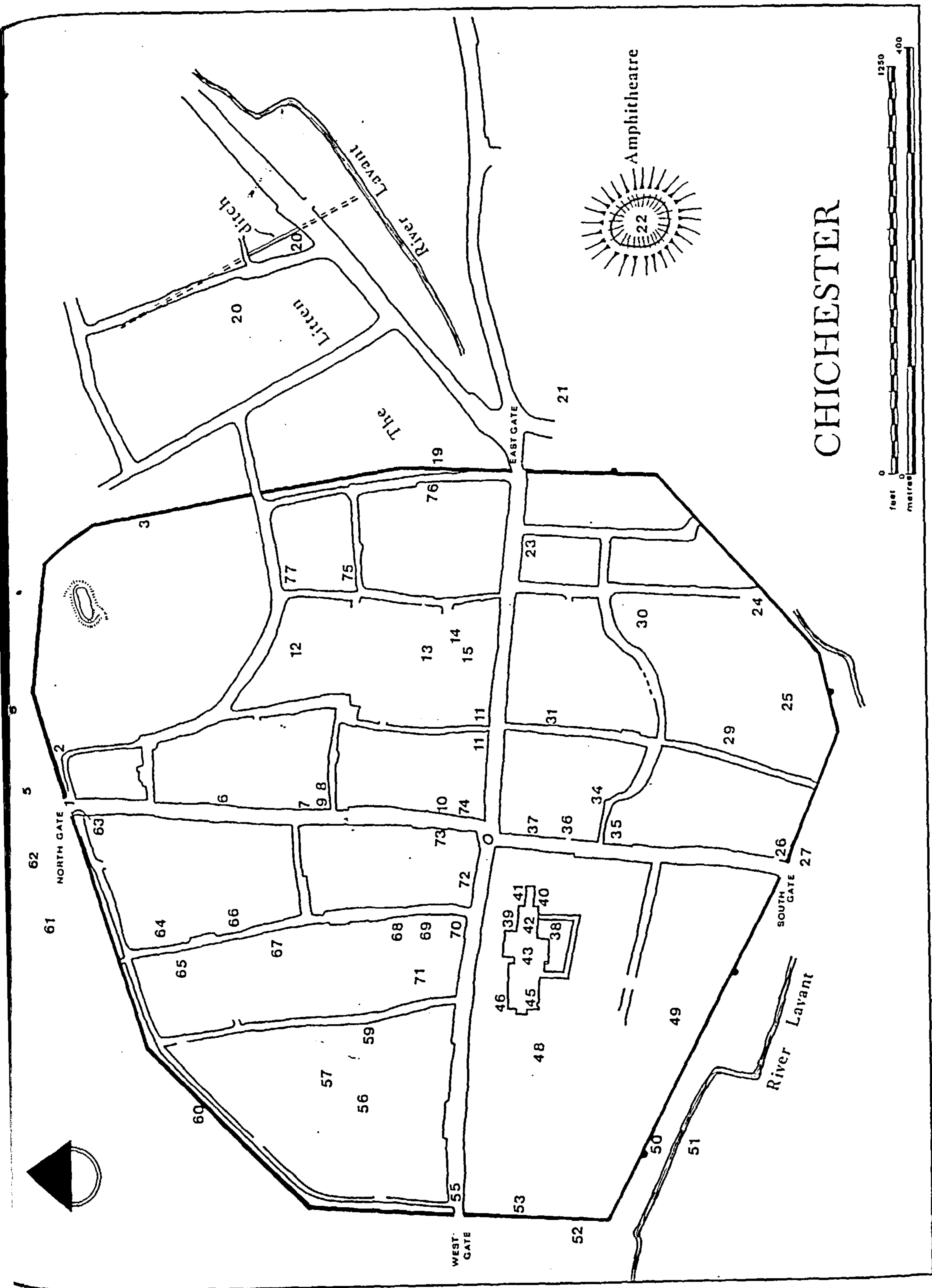
<sup>3</sup> At the Gambier Parry Lodge site at Gloucester a military tombstone (II C.) was found.

**TEXT BOUND  
INTO  
THE SPINE**

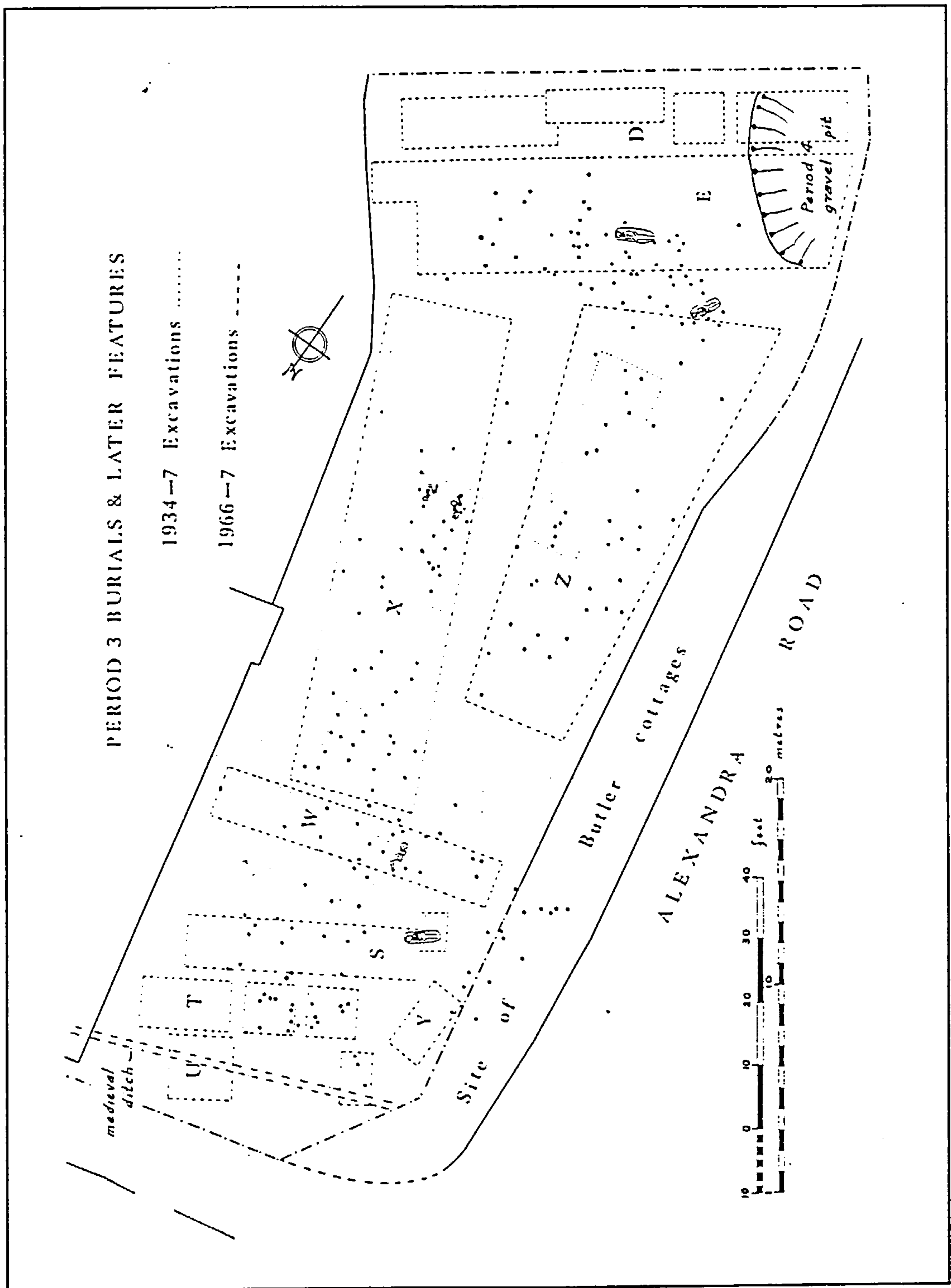




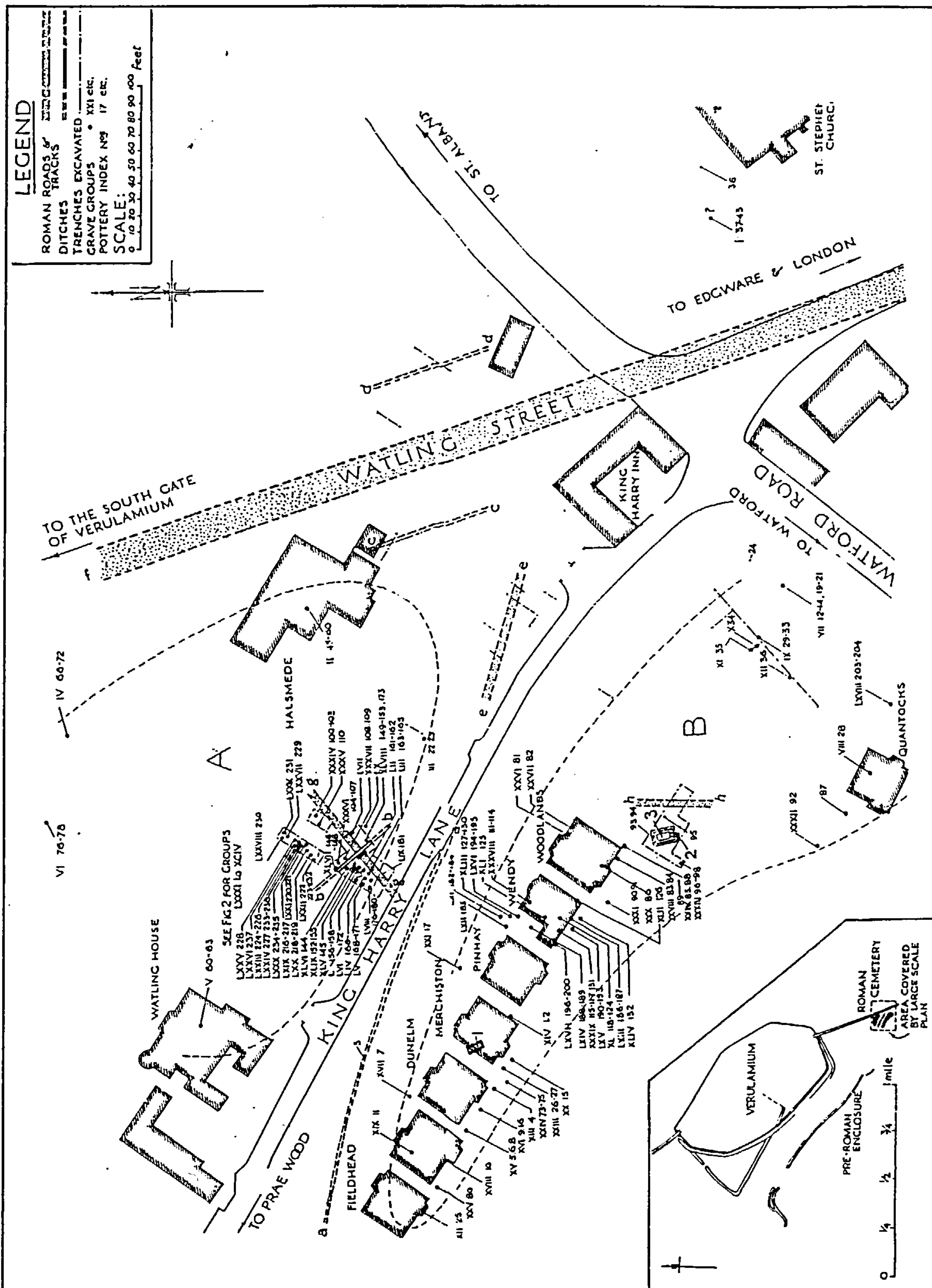
Location of the sites analysed in the present work



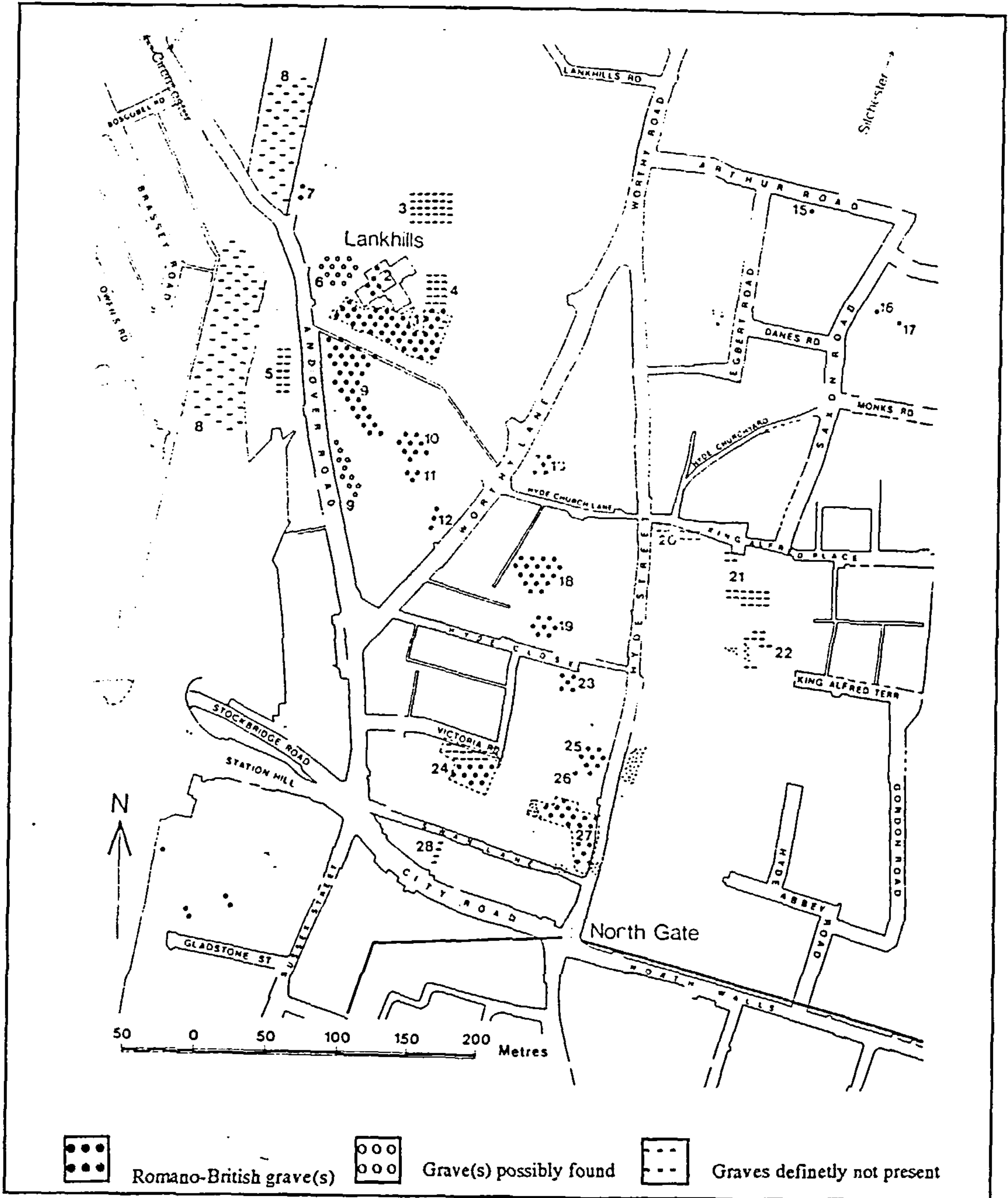
Location of the cemetery at St Pancras (20), Chichester (after Down & Rule 1971)



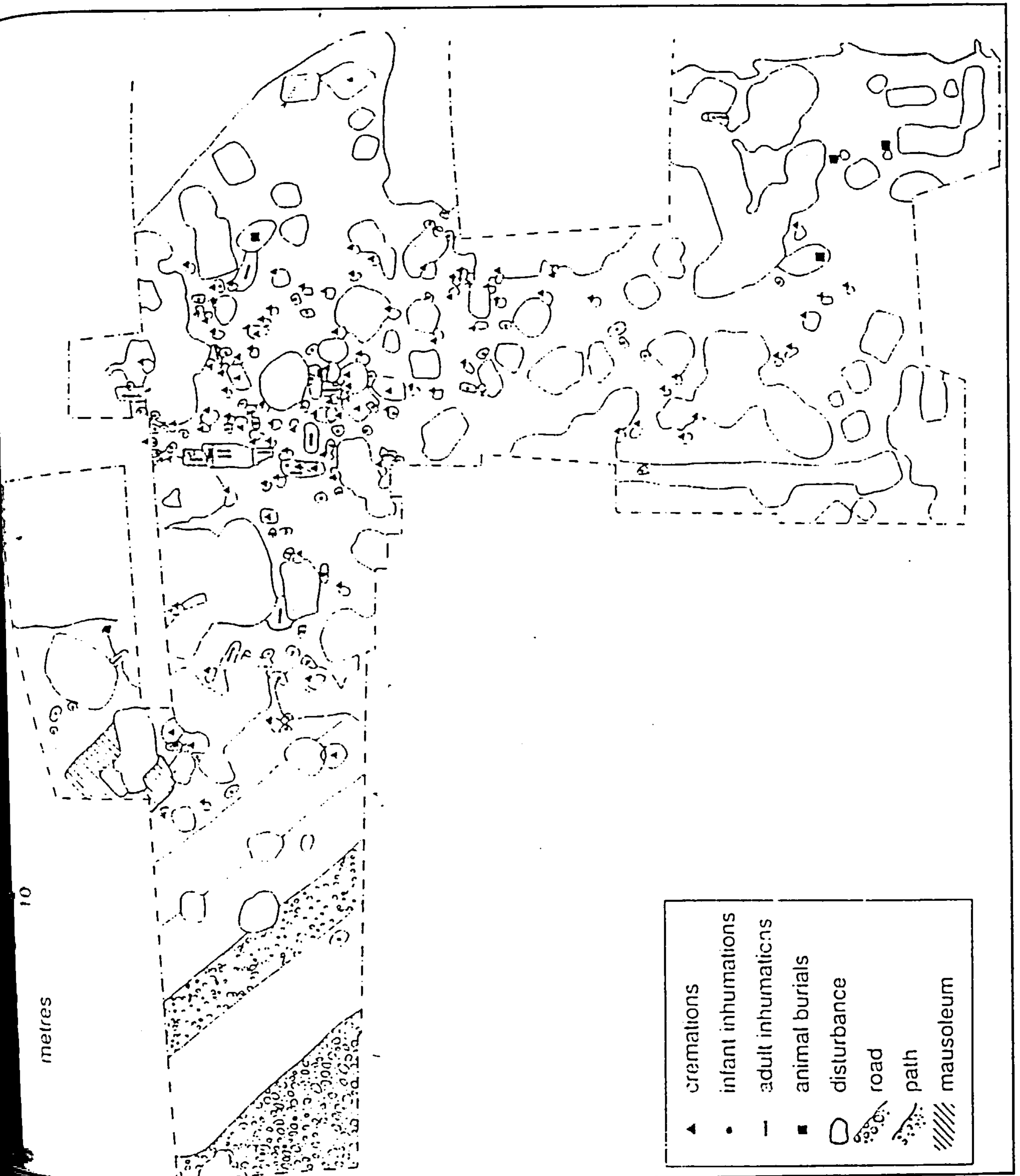
Plan of the cemetery at St. Pancras, Chichester (after Down & Rule 1971)



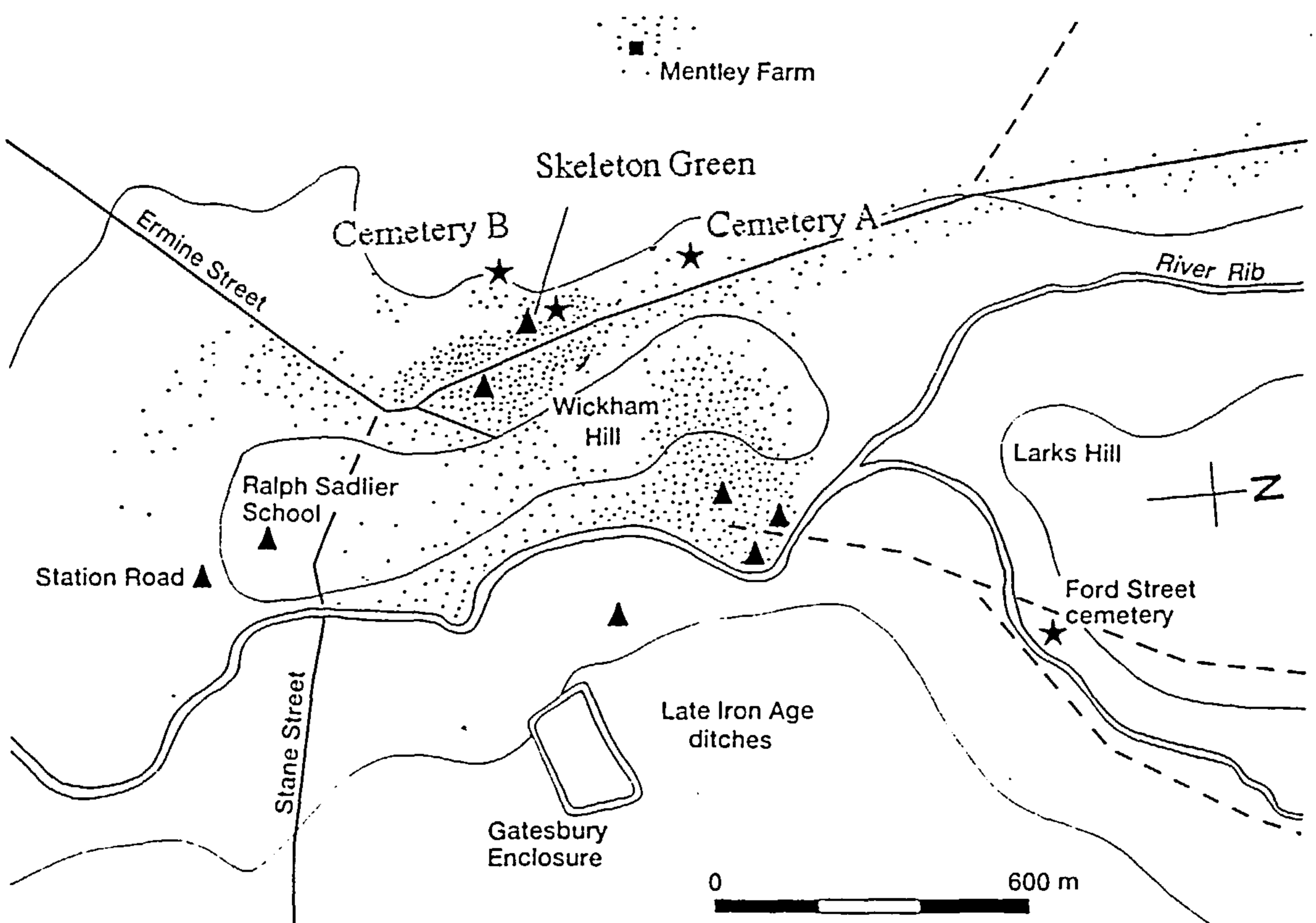




Distribution of cemeteries to the north of Winchester (after Clarke 1979)

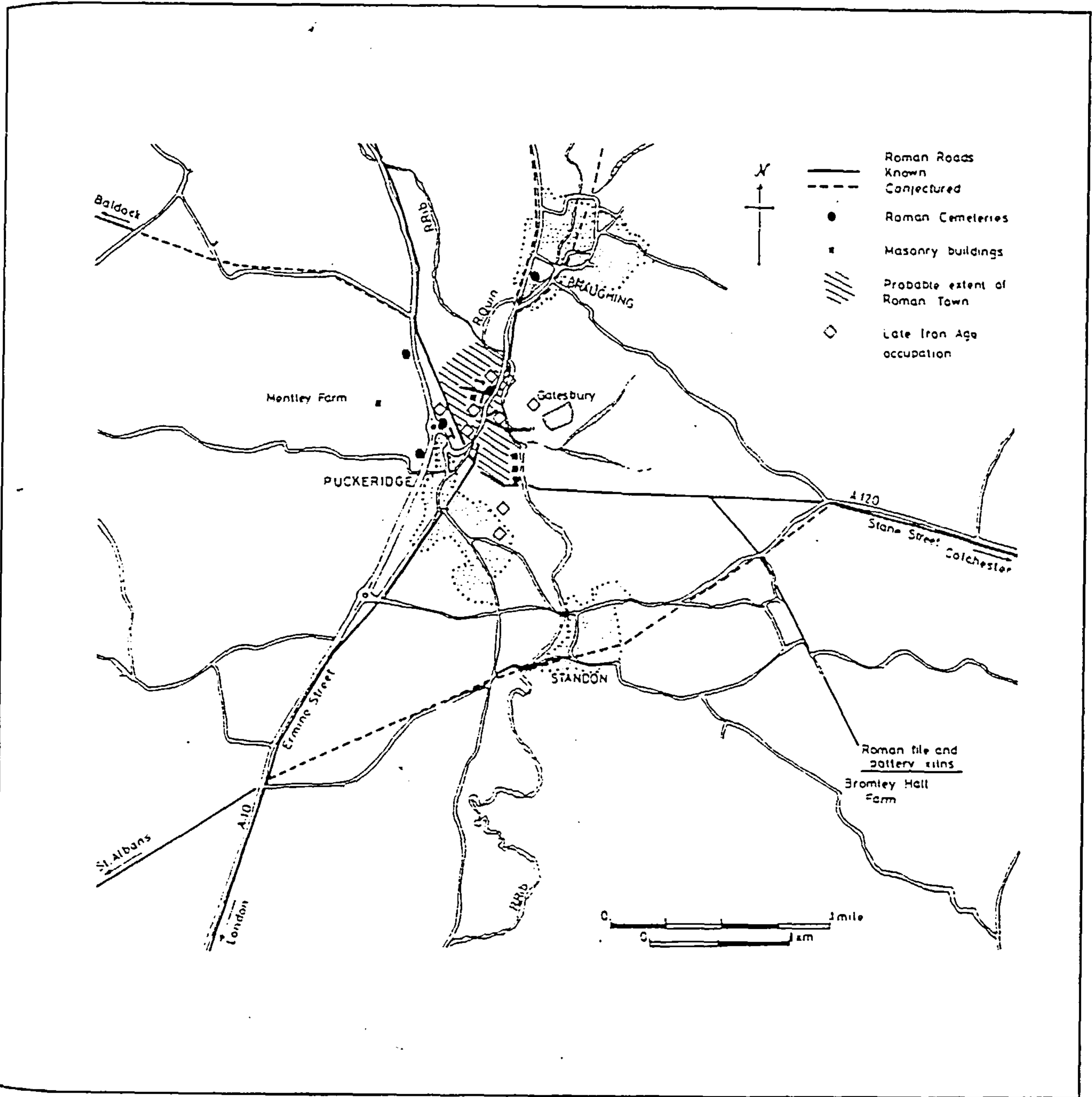


Plan of the cemetery at Hyde Street, Winchester (after Kjolbye-Biddle 1995)

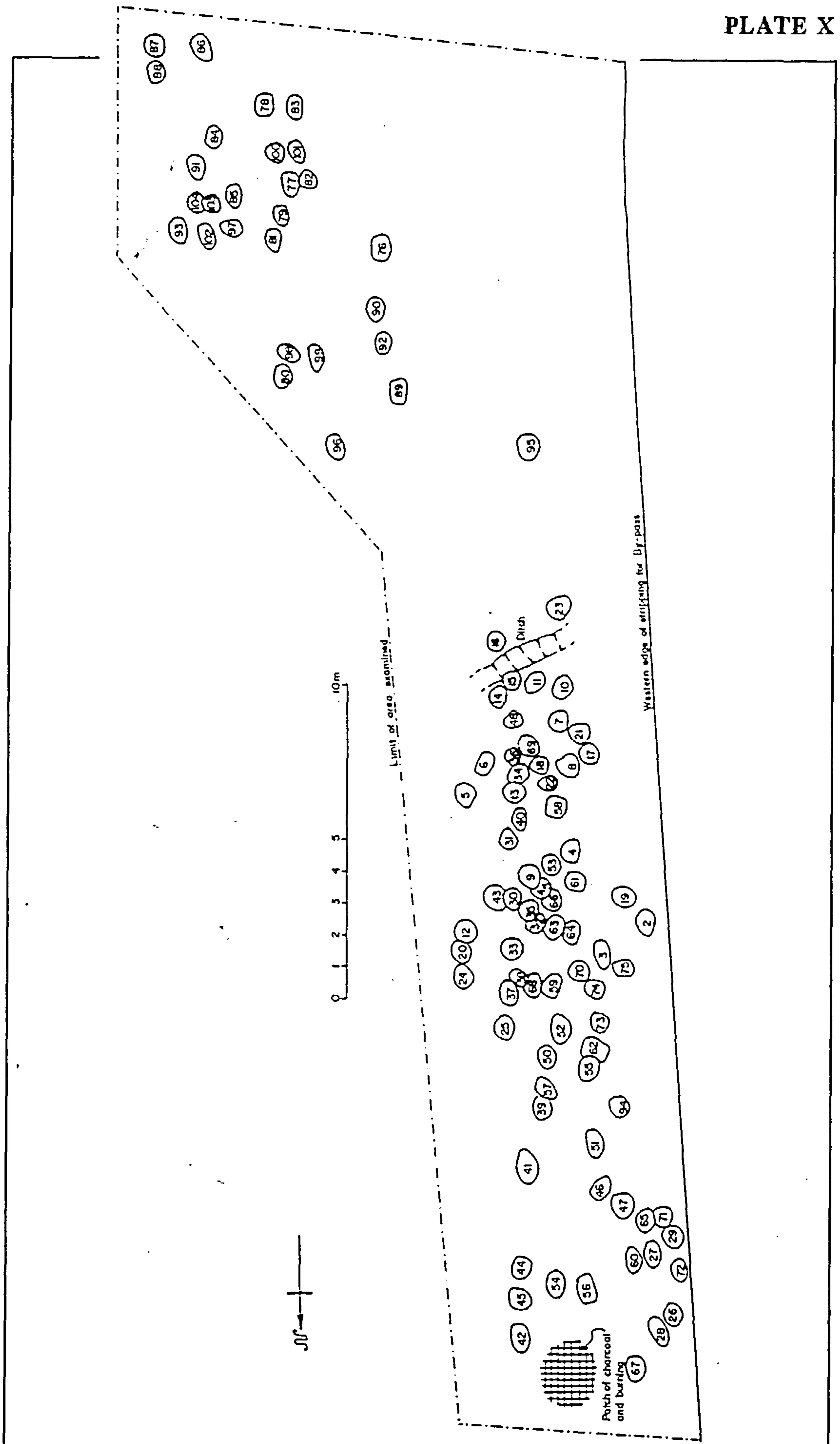


Location of cemeteries 'A', 'B' and Skeleton Green, Braughing (after Partridge 1981)

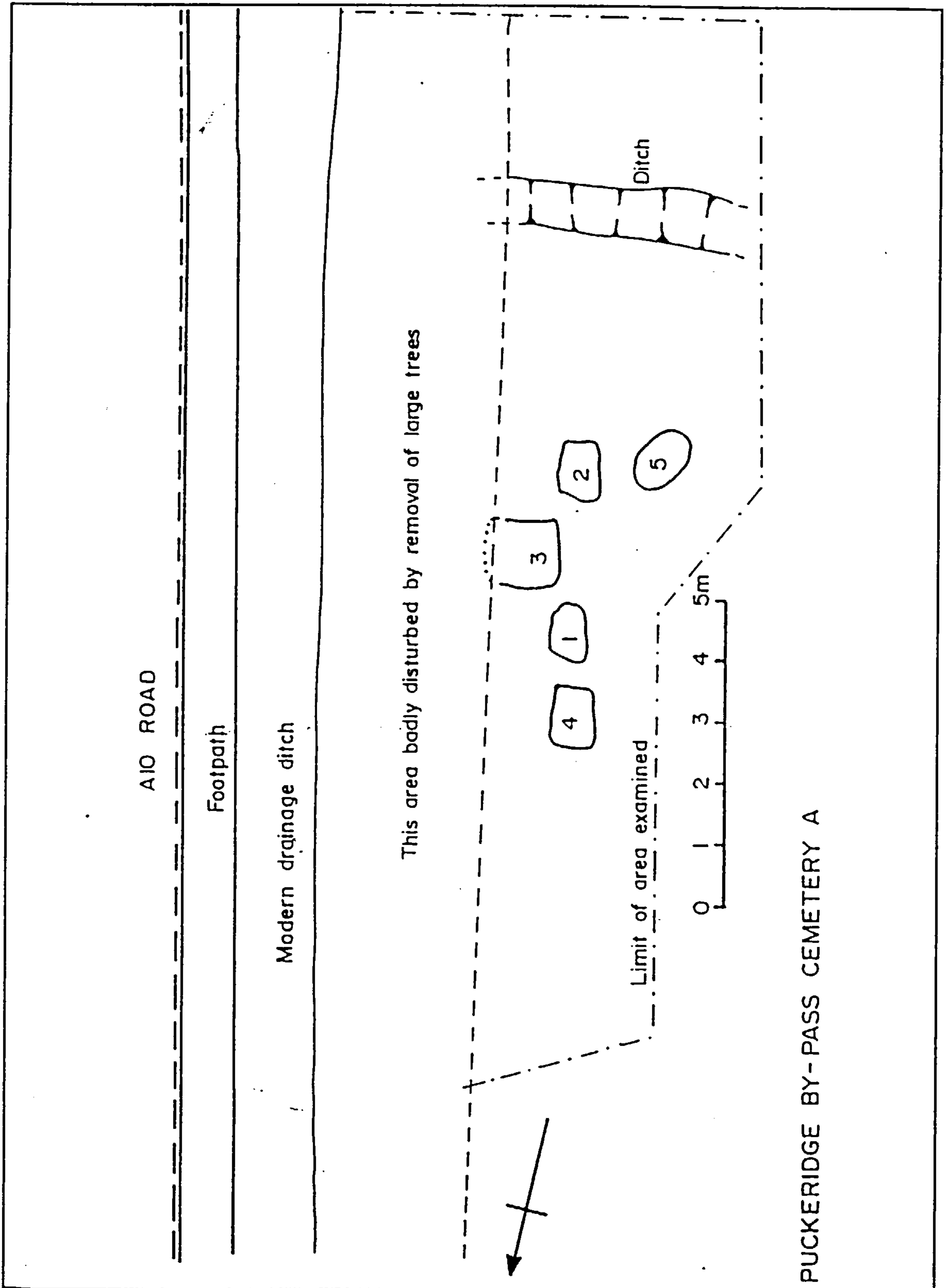




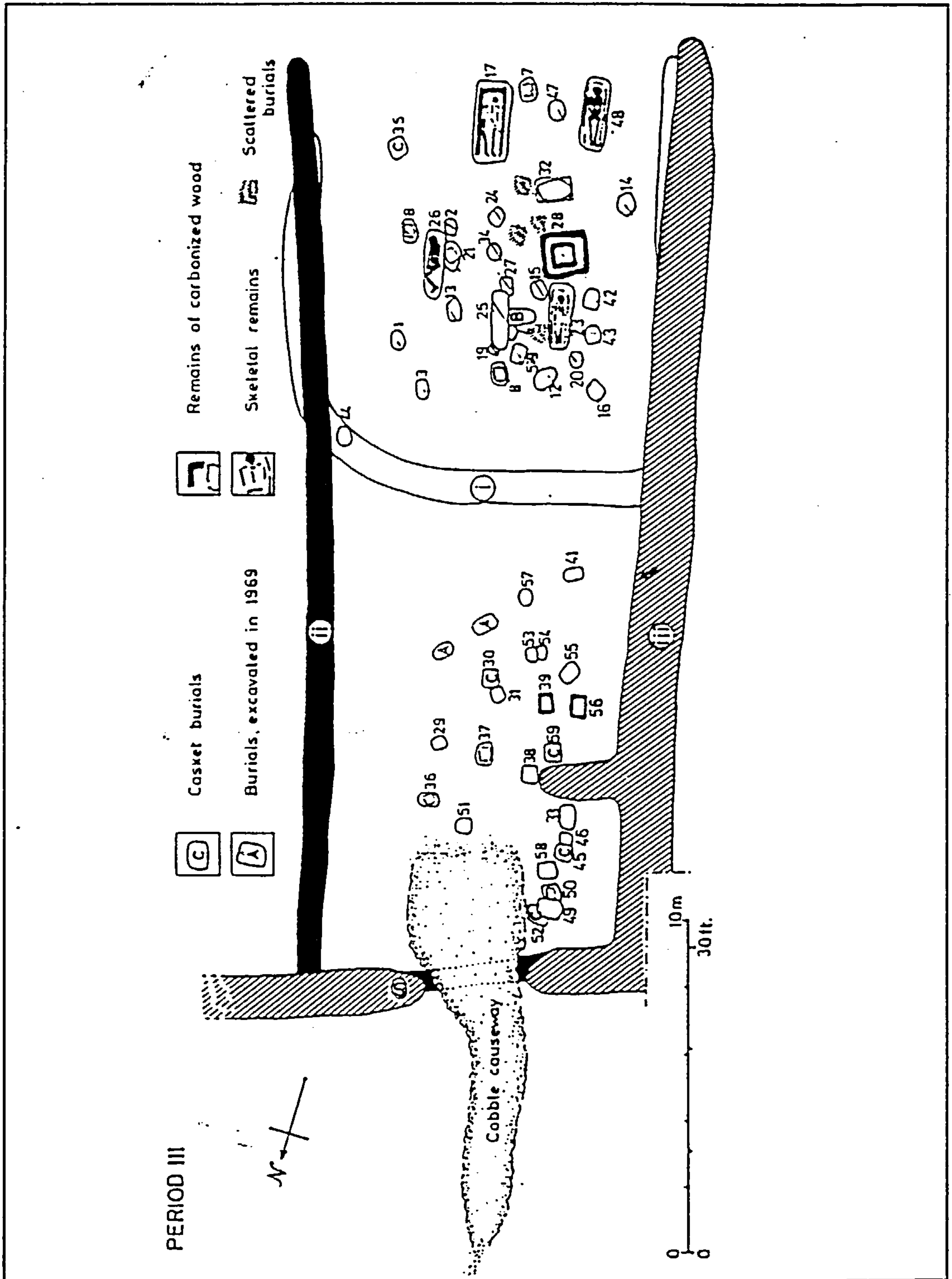
Distribution of cemeteries at Puckeridge-Braughing (after Partridge 1981)



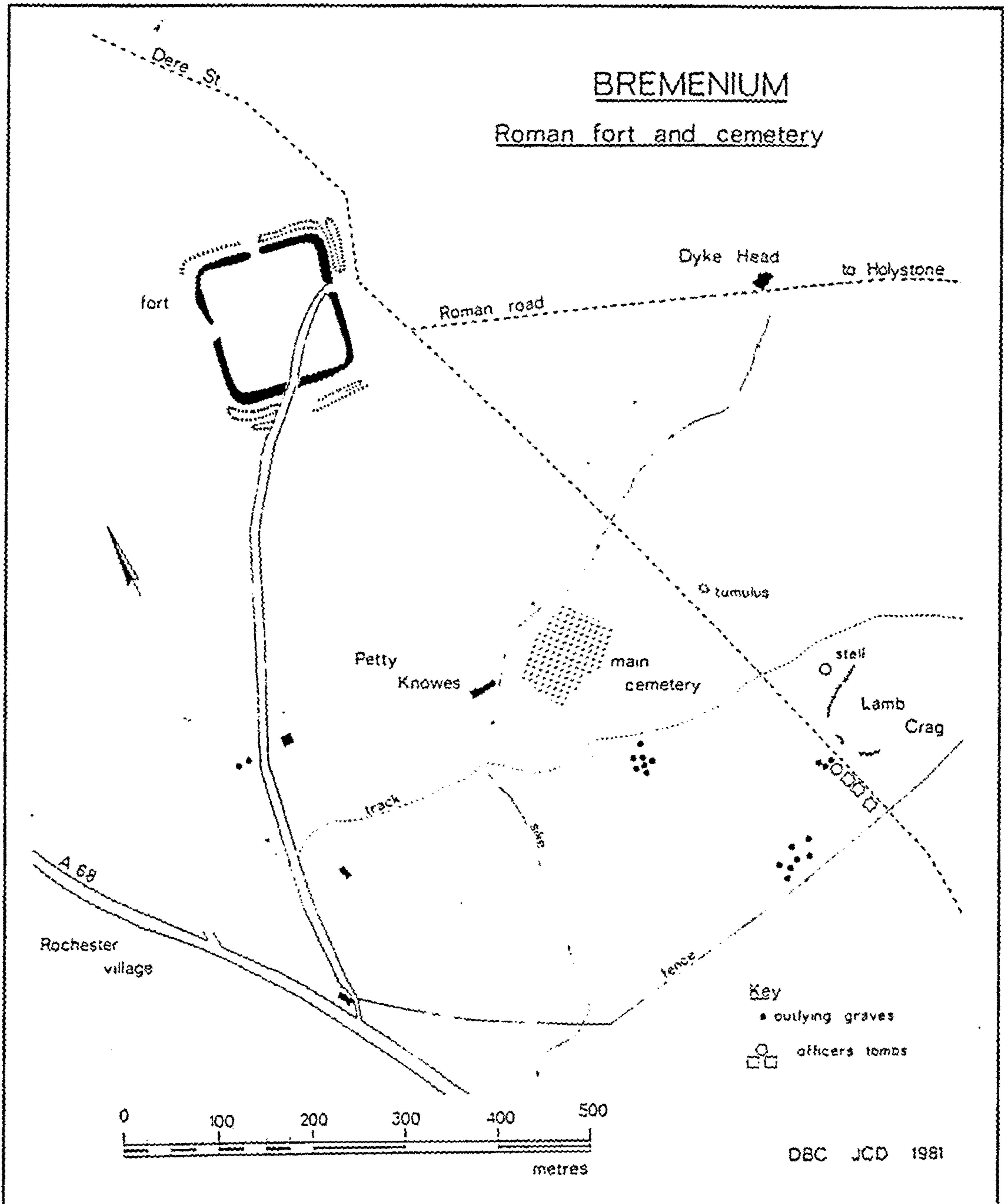
Location of the cemetery at Skeleton Green, Braughing (after Partridge 1981)



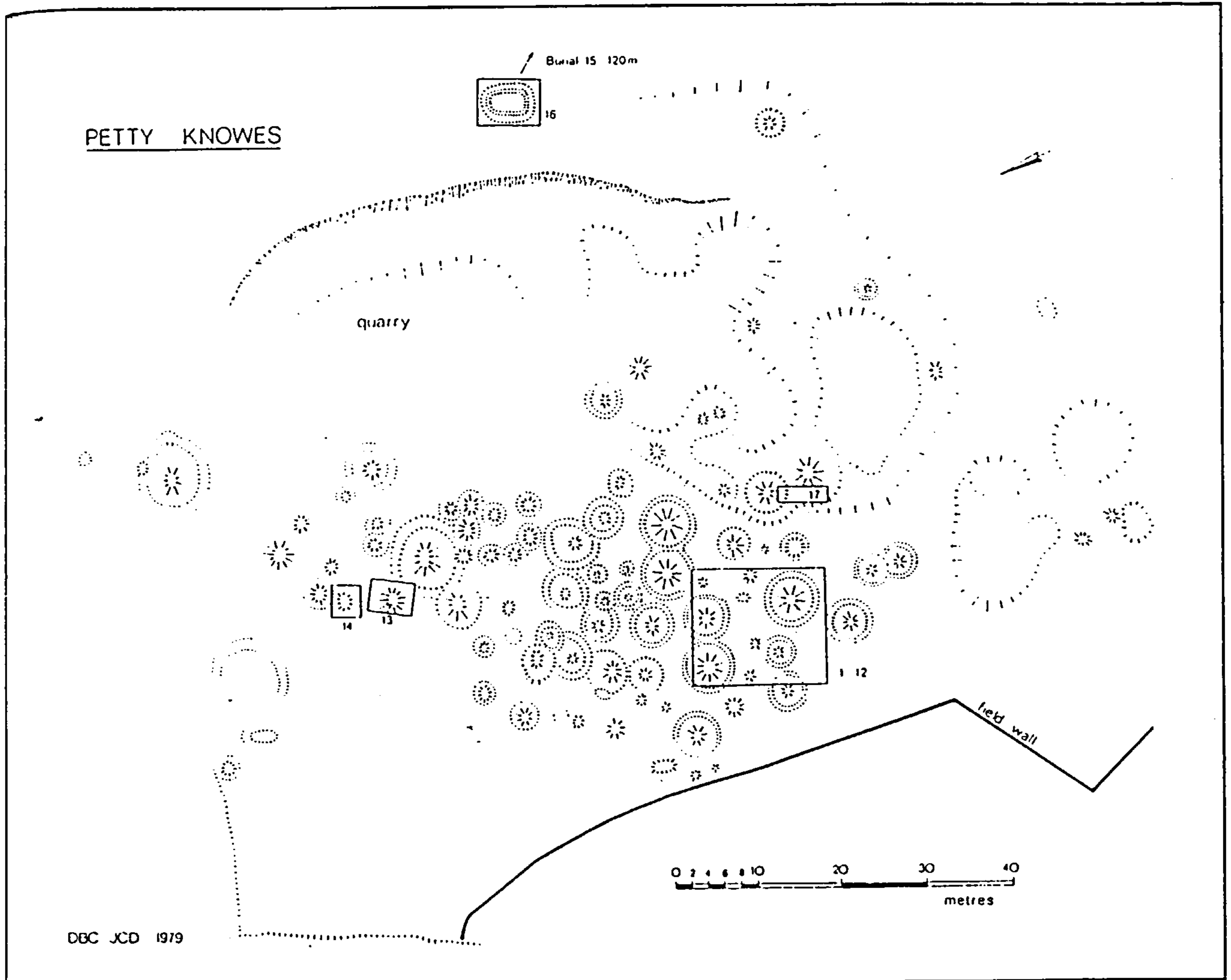
Plan of Cemetery 'A', Puckeridge-Braughing (after Partridge 1977)



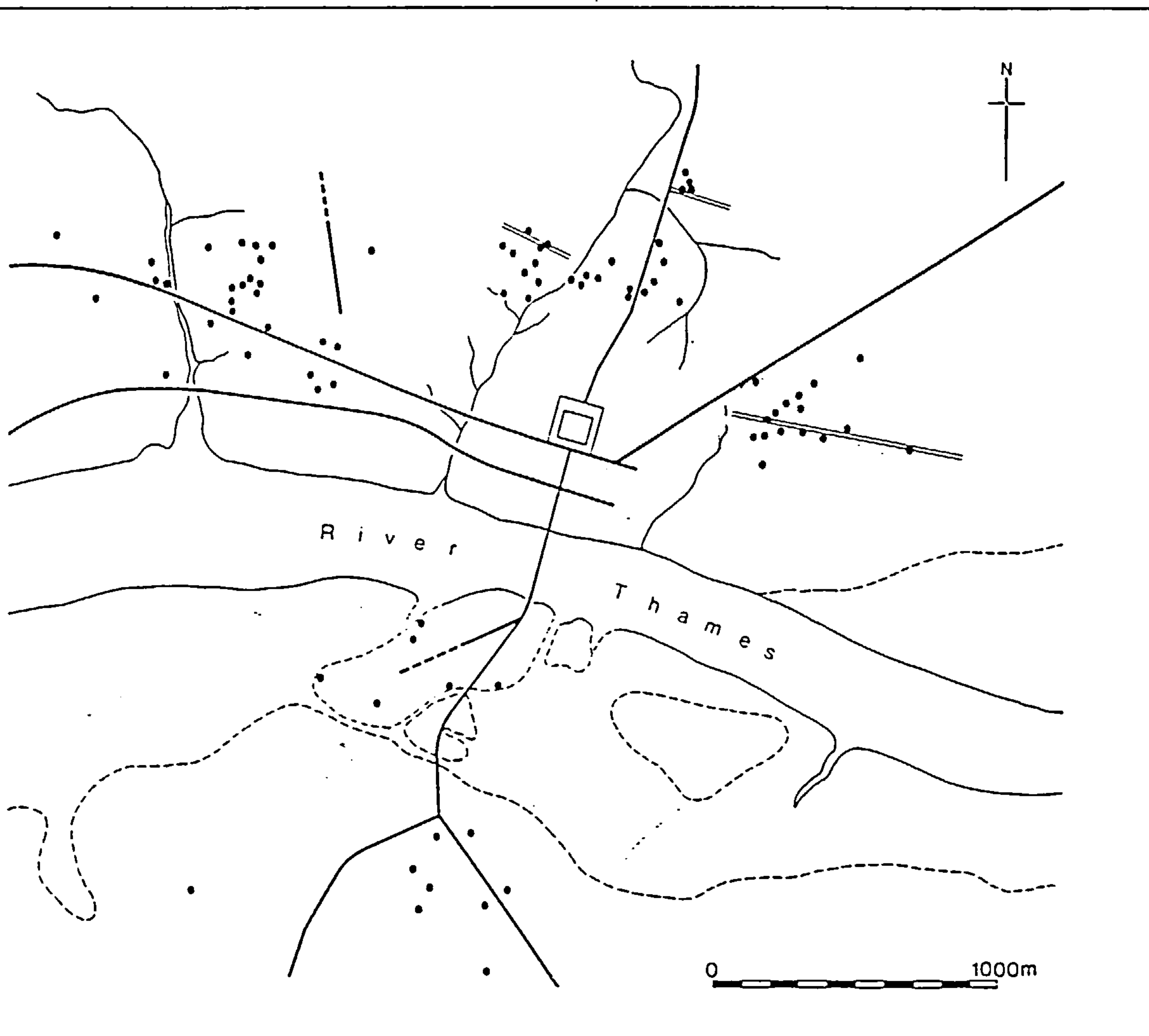
Plan of cemetery 'B', Puckeridge-Braughing (after Partridge 1977)



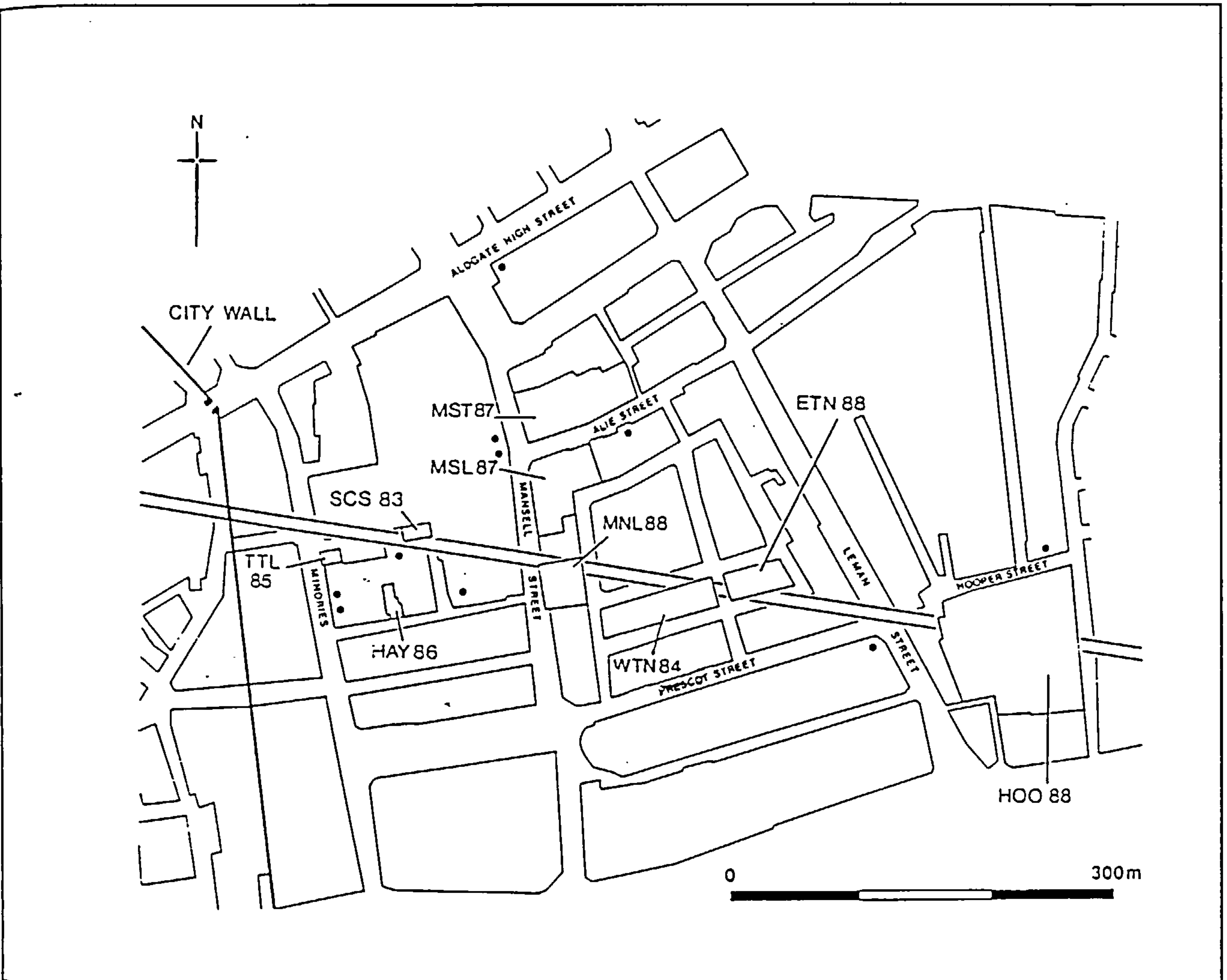
Location of the cemetery at Petty Knowes (after Charlton & Mitcheson 1984)



Plan of the cemetery at Petty Knowes, High Rochester (after Charlton & Mitcheson 1984)

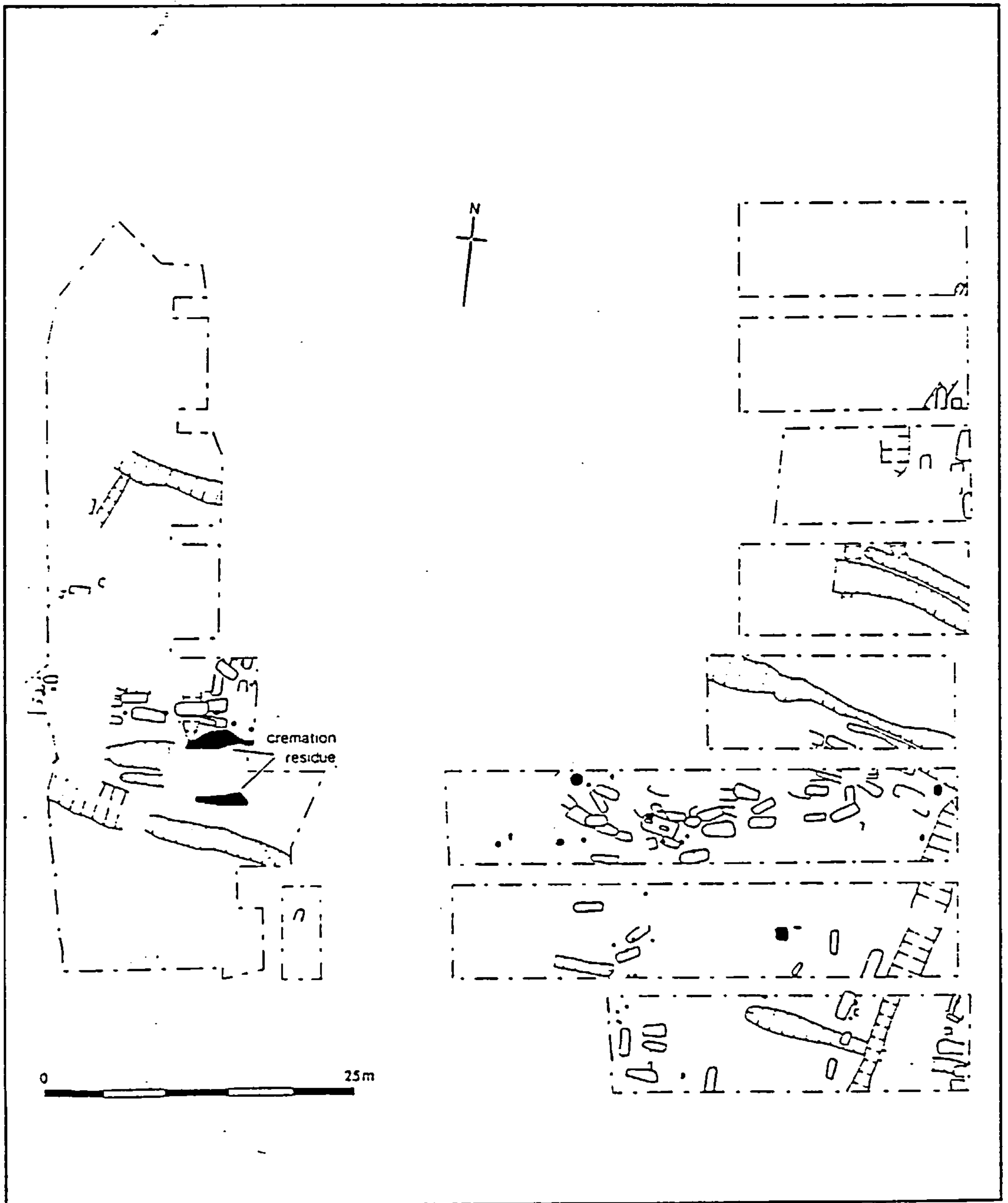


Distribution of cemeteries around London (after Barber *et al.* 1990)

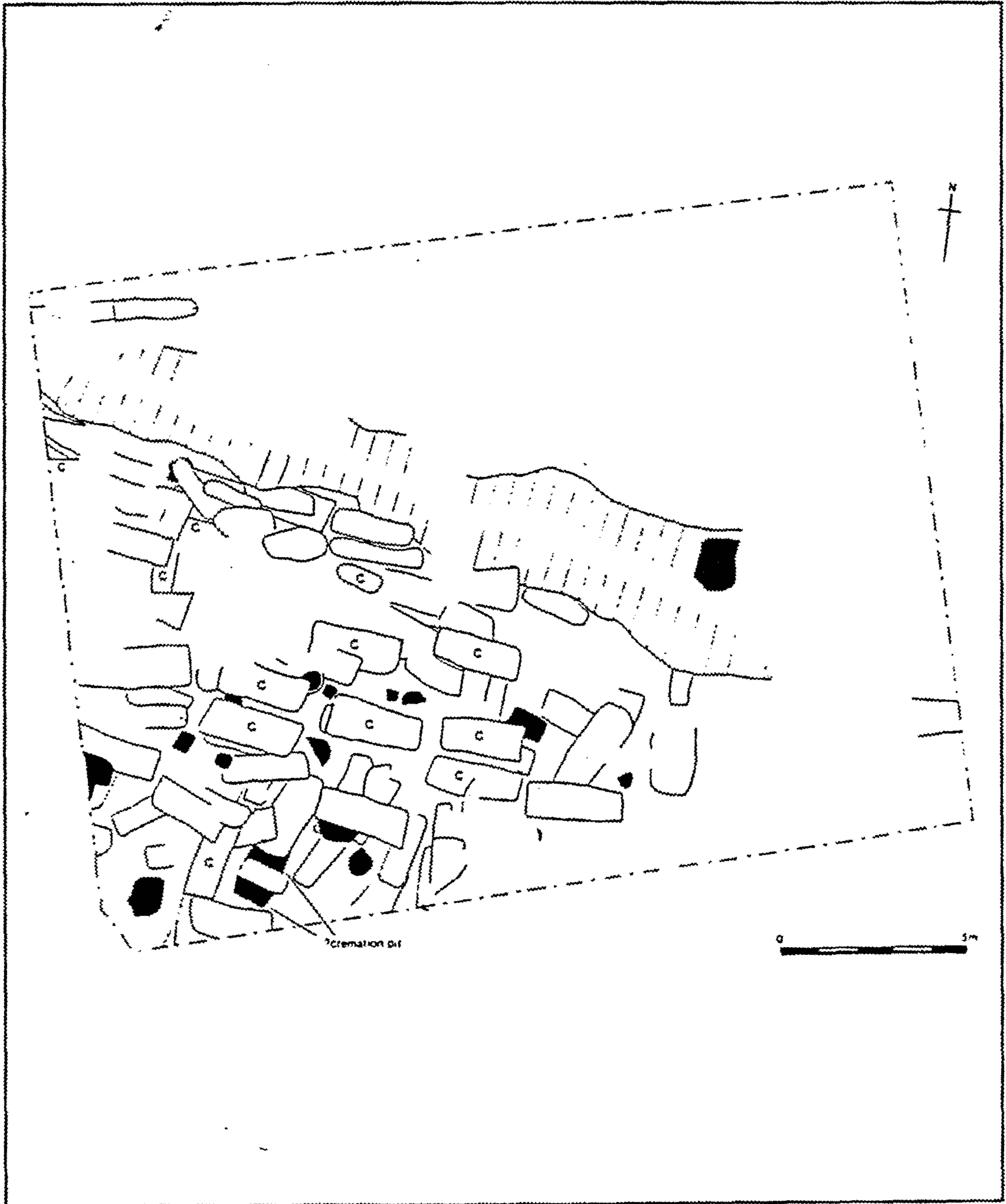


Location of the Eastern Cemetery, London (after Barber *et al.* 1990)

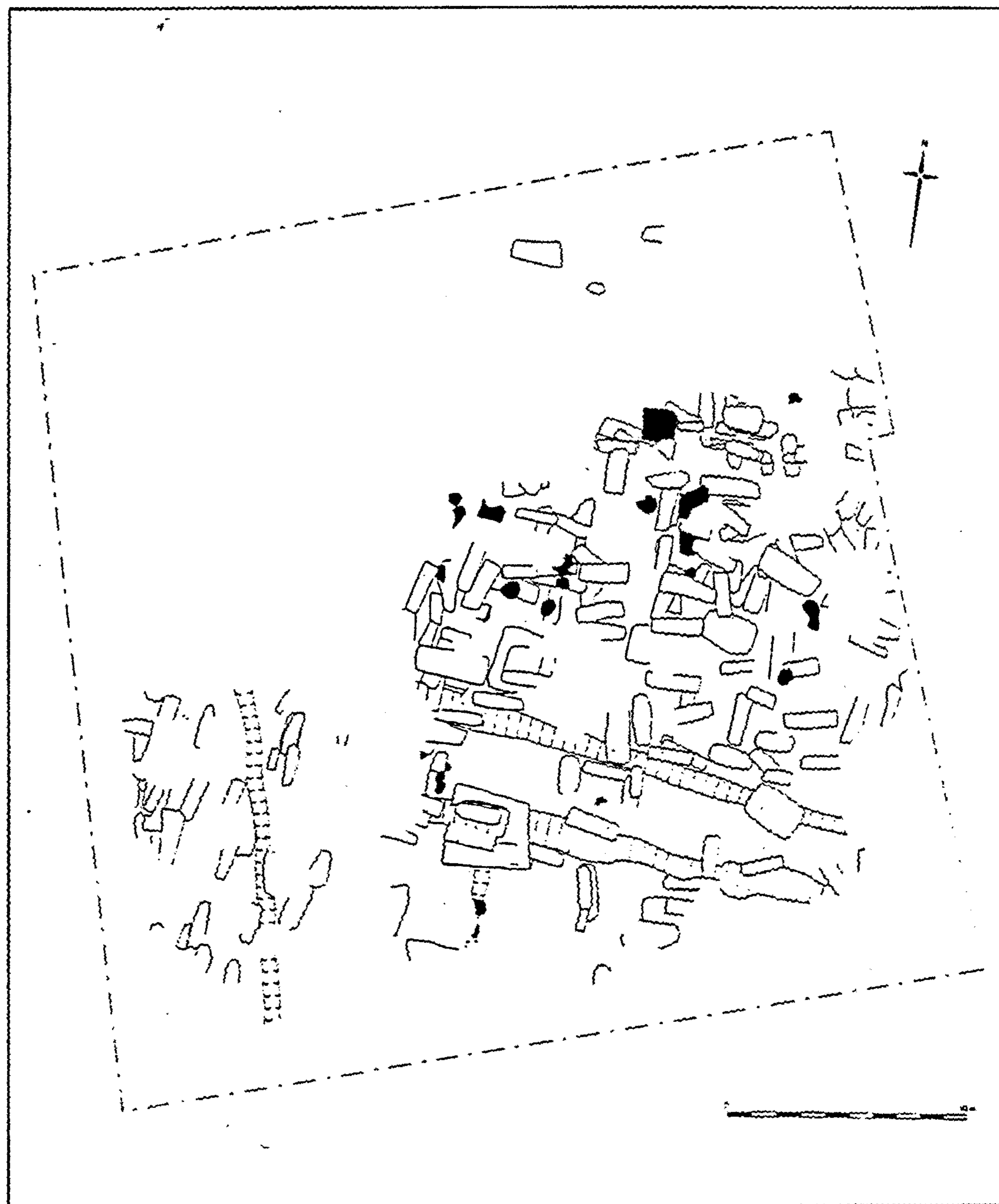




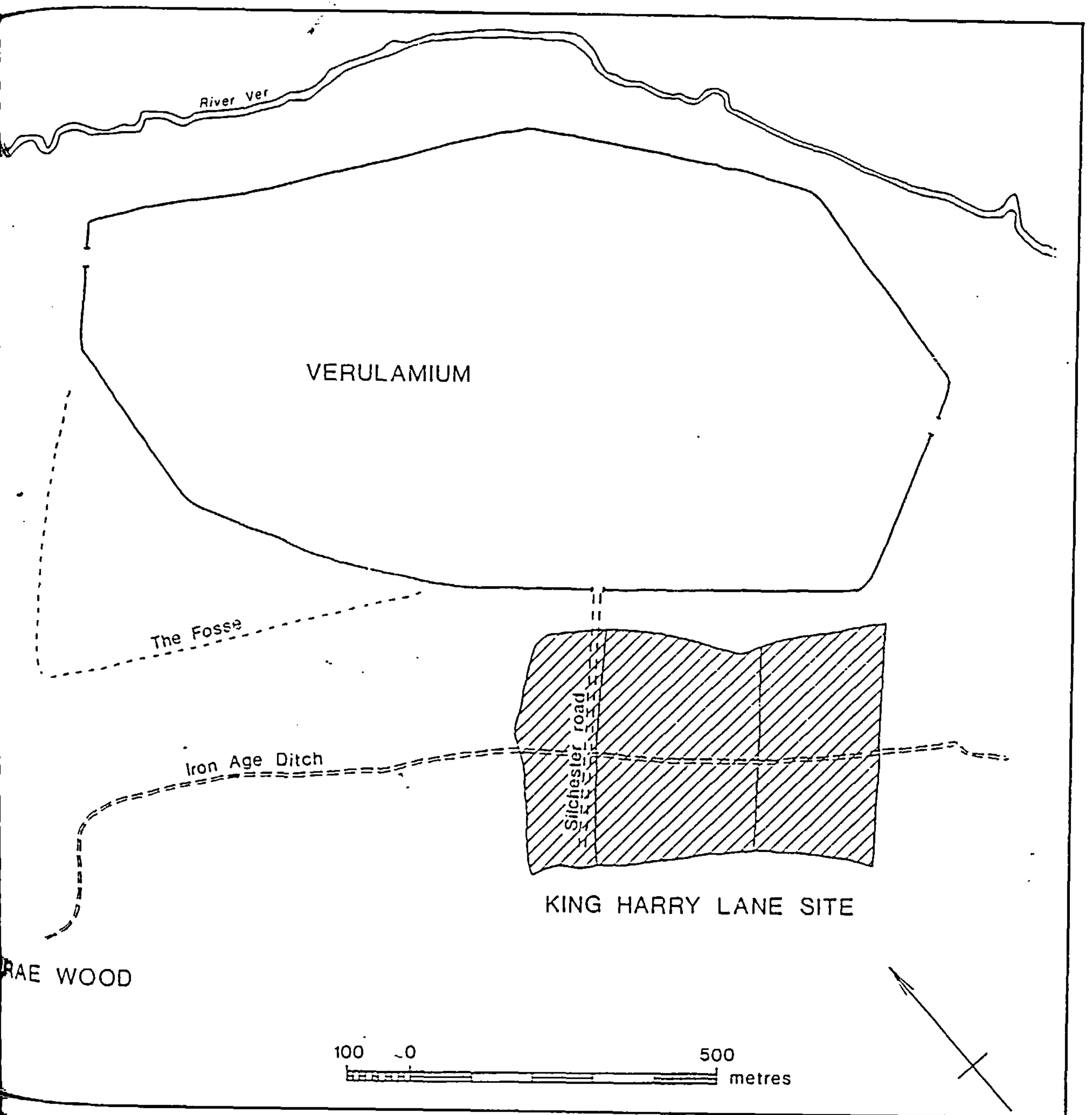
Plan of the Eastern Cemetery, London, area H0088 (after Barber et al. 1990)



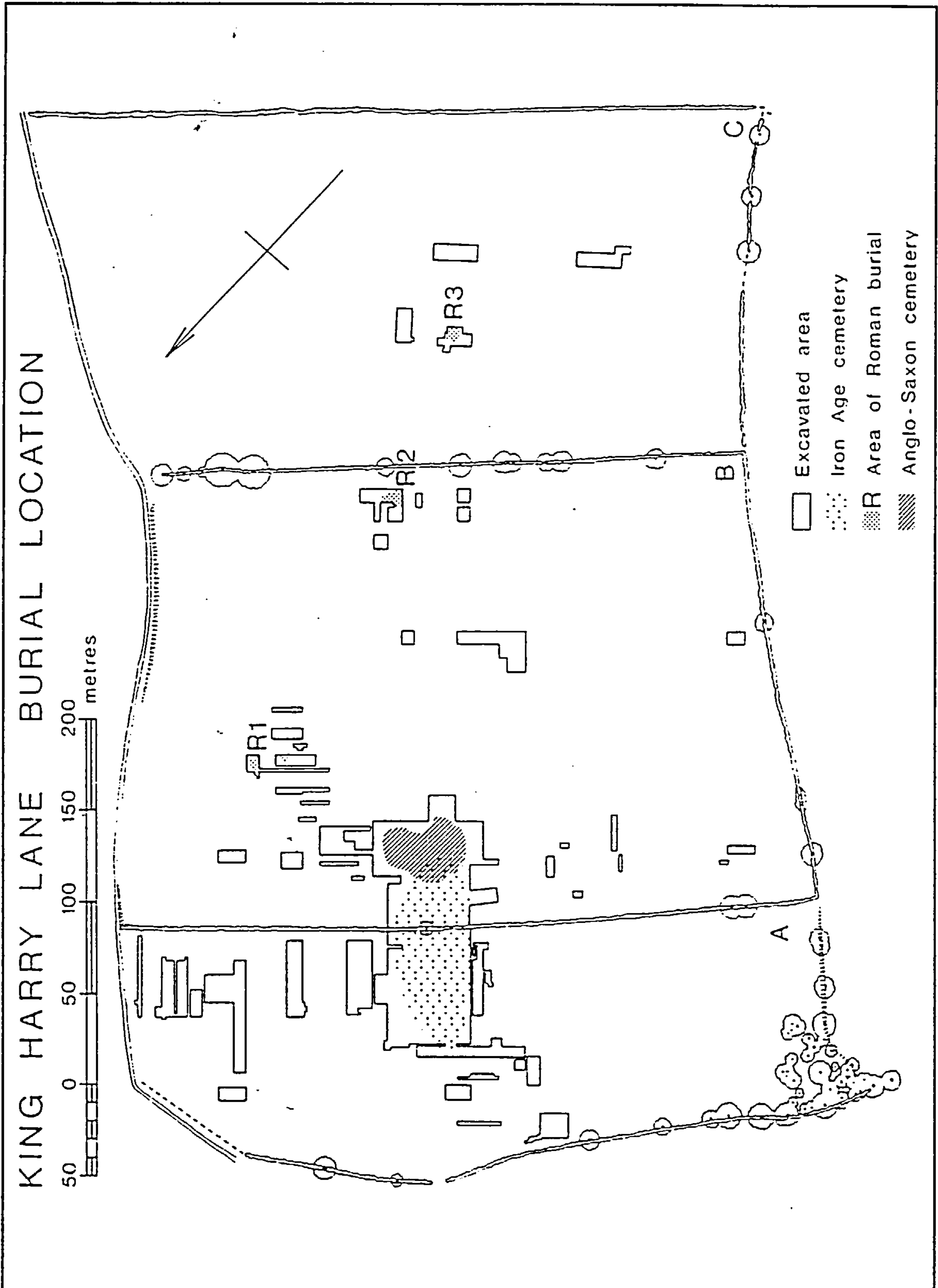
Plan of the Eastern Cemetery, London, area MST87 (after Barber et al. 1990)



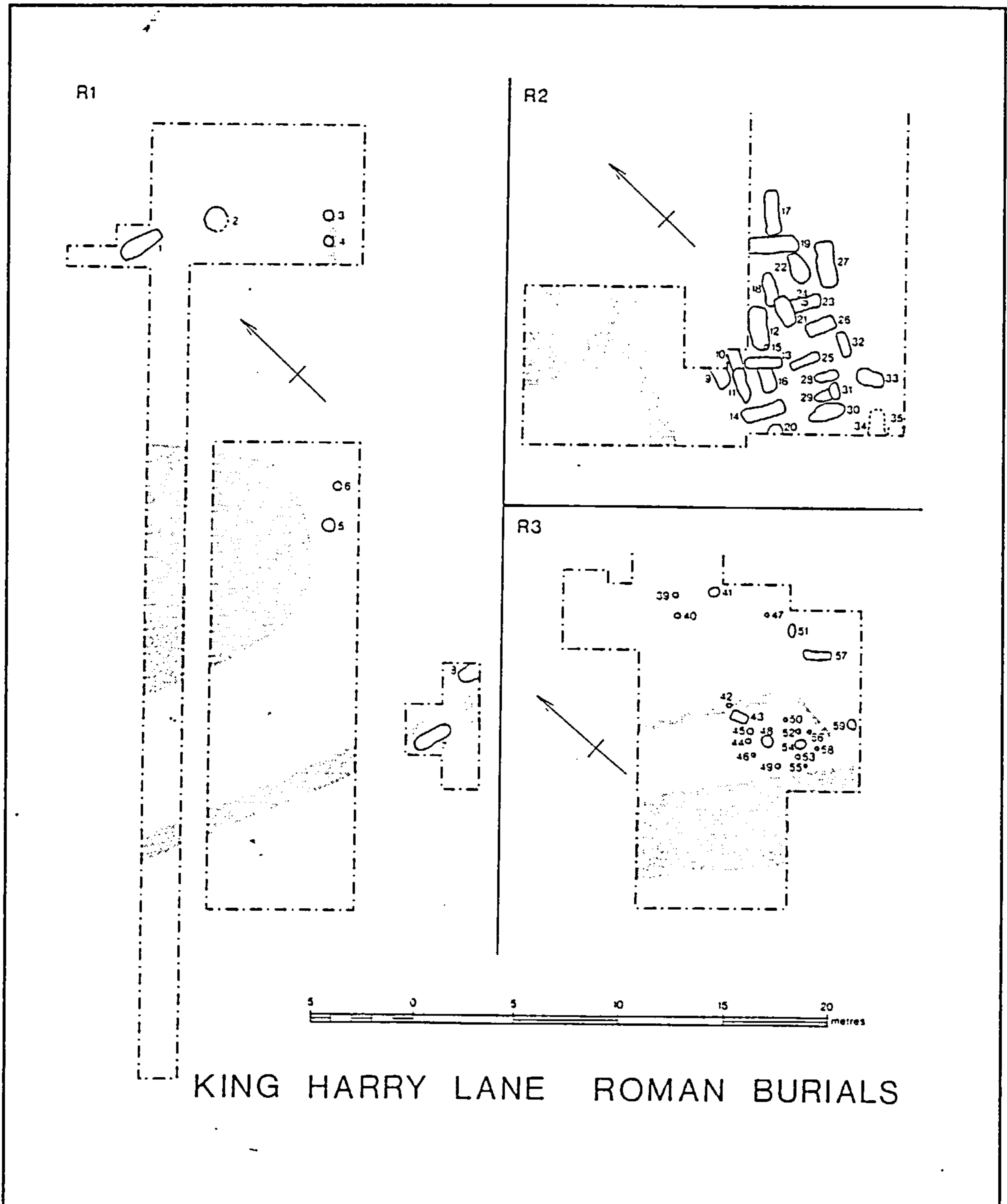
Plan of the Eastern Cemetery, London, area MSL87 (after Barber et al. 1990)



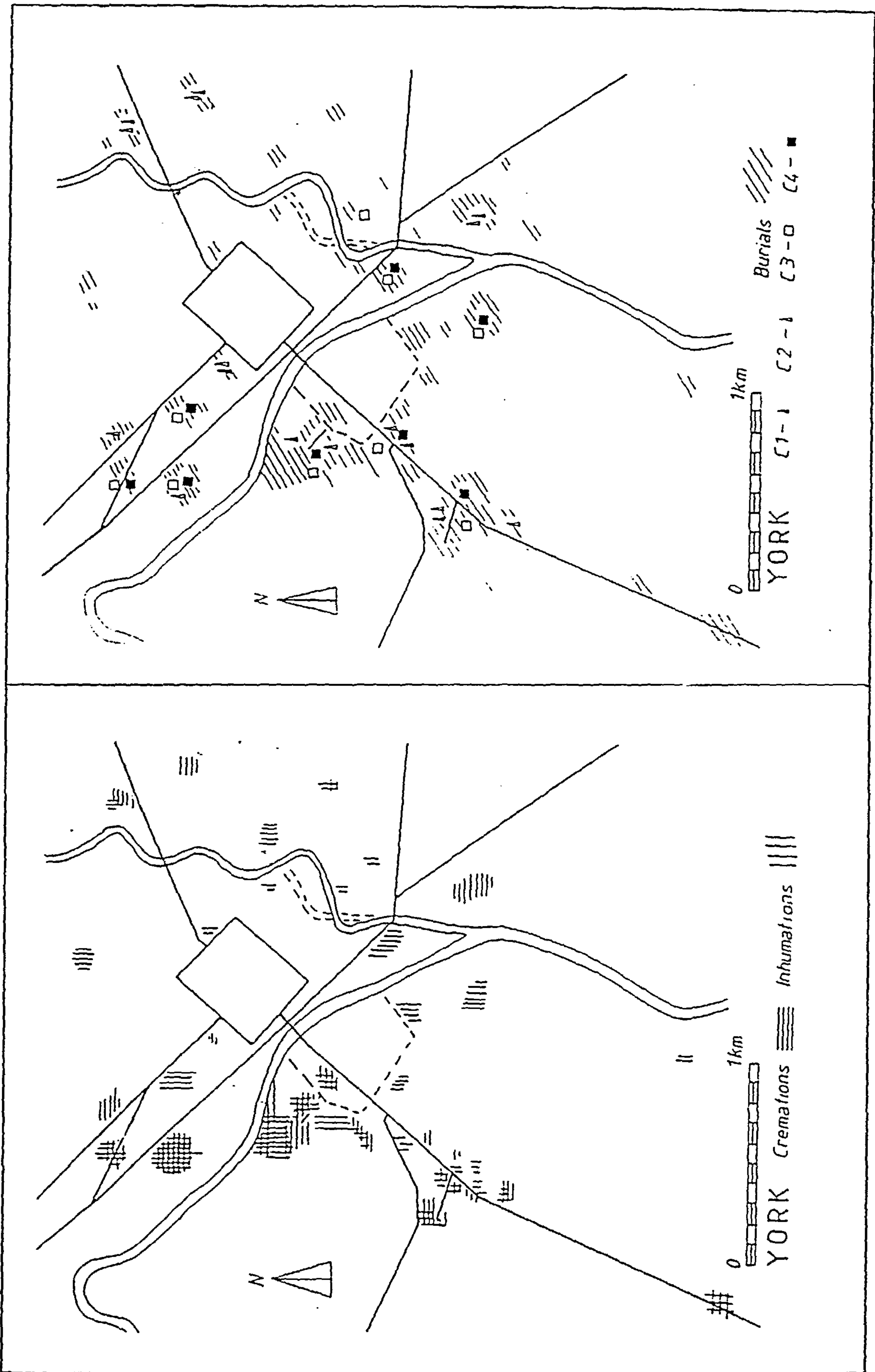
Location of the cemetery at King Harry Lane, St. Albans (after Stead & Rigby 1989)



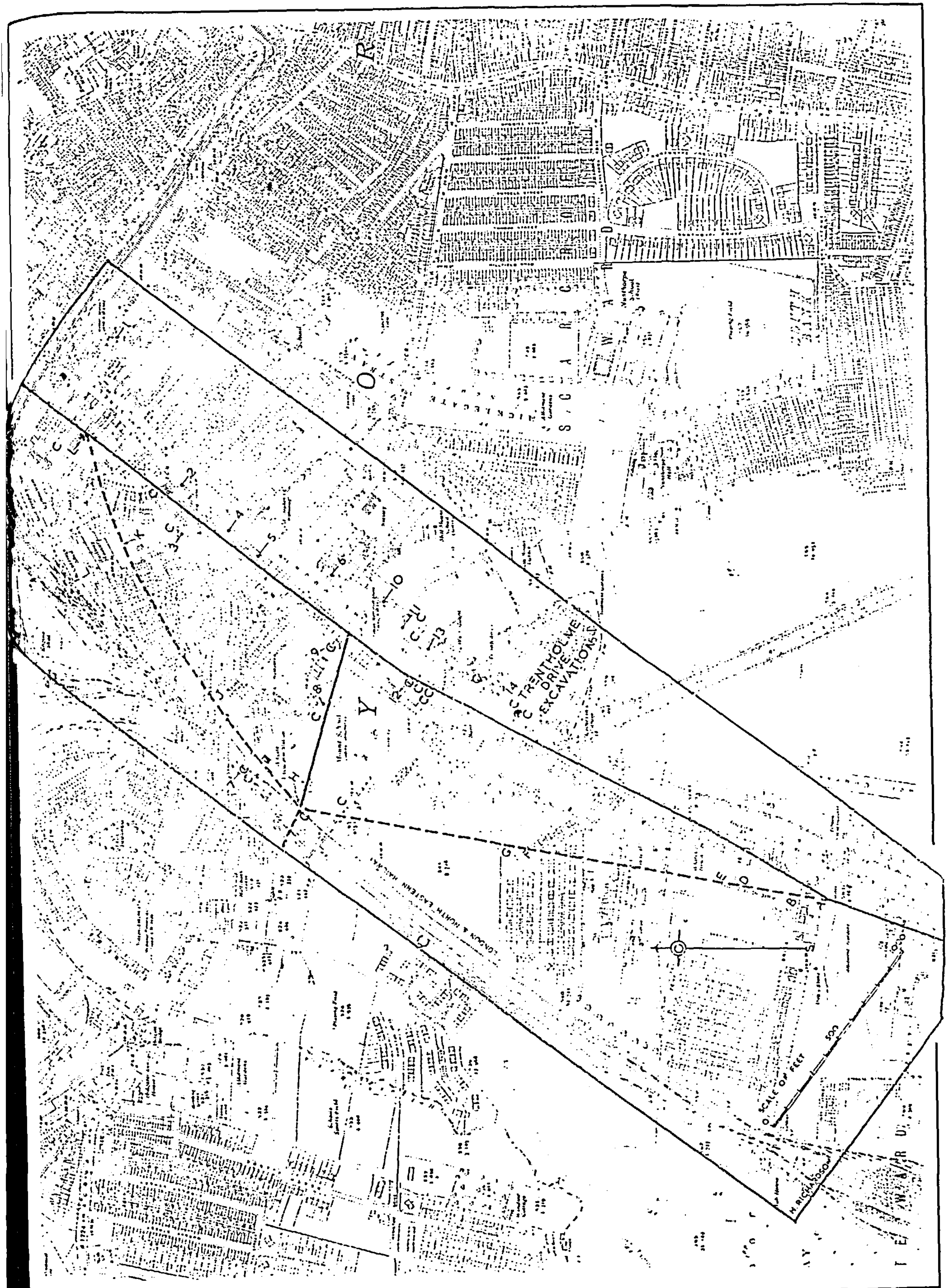
Location of excavated areas at King Harry Lane, St. Albans (after Stead & Rigby 1989)



Plan of the cemetery at King Harry Lane, St. Albans (after Stead & Rigby 1989)

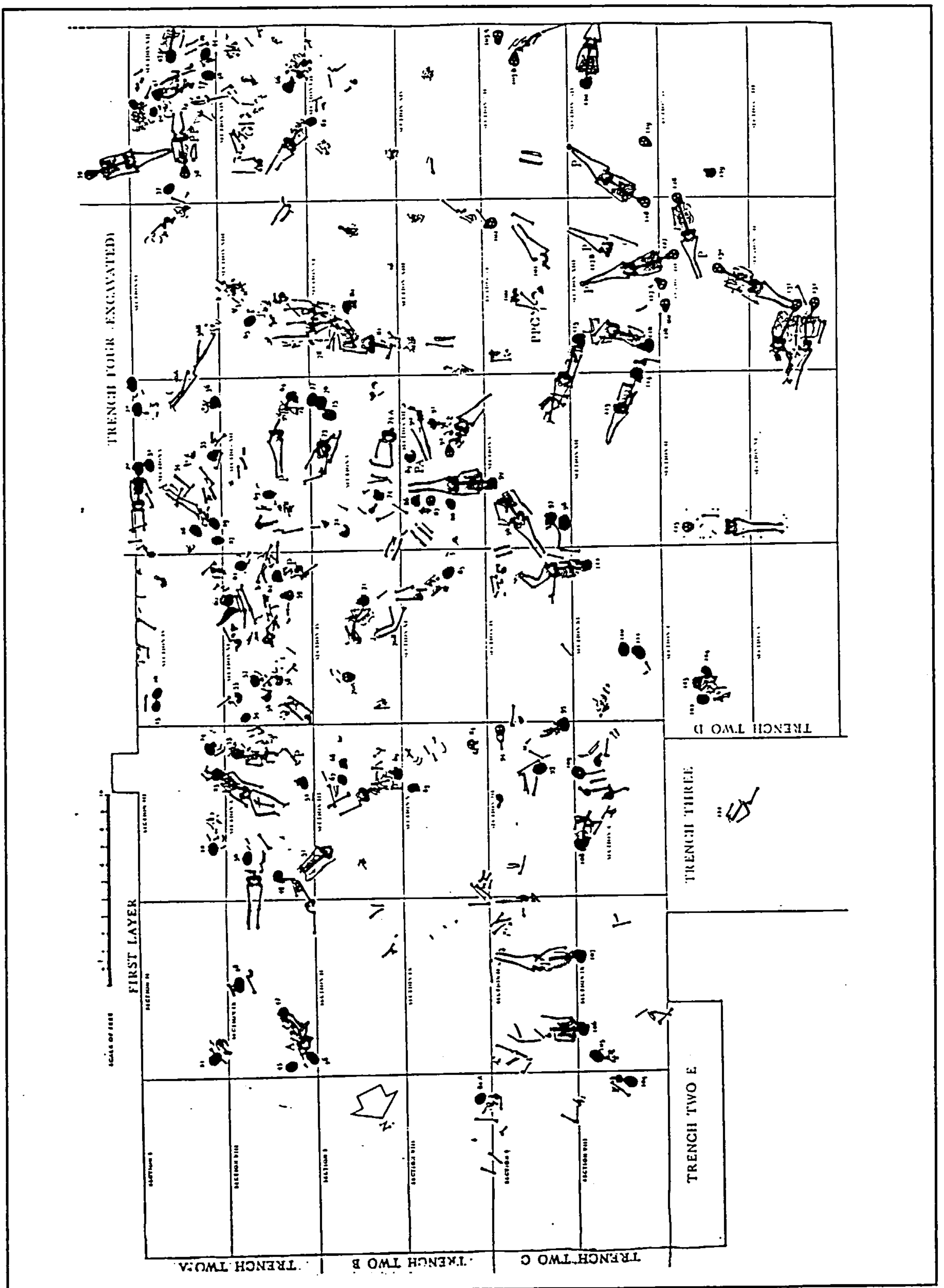


Distribution of cemeteries at York (after Jones 1984)

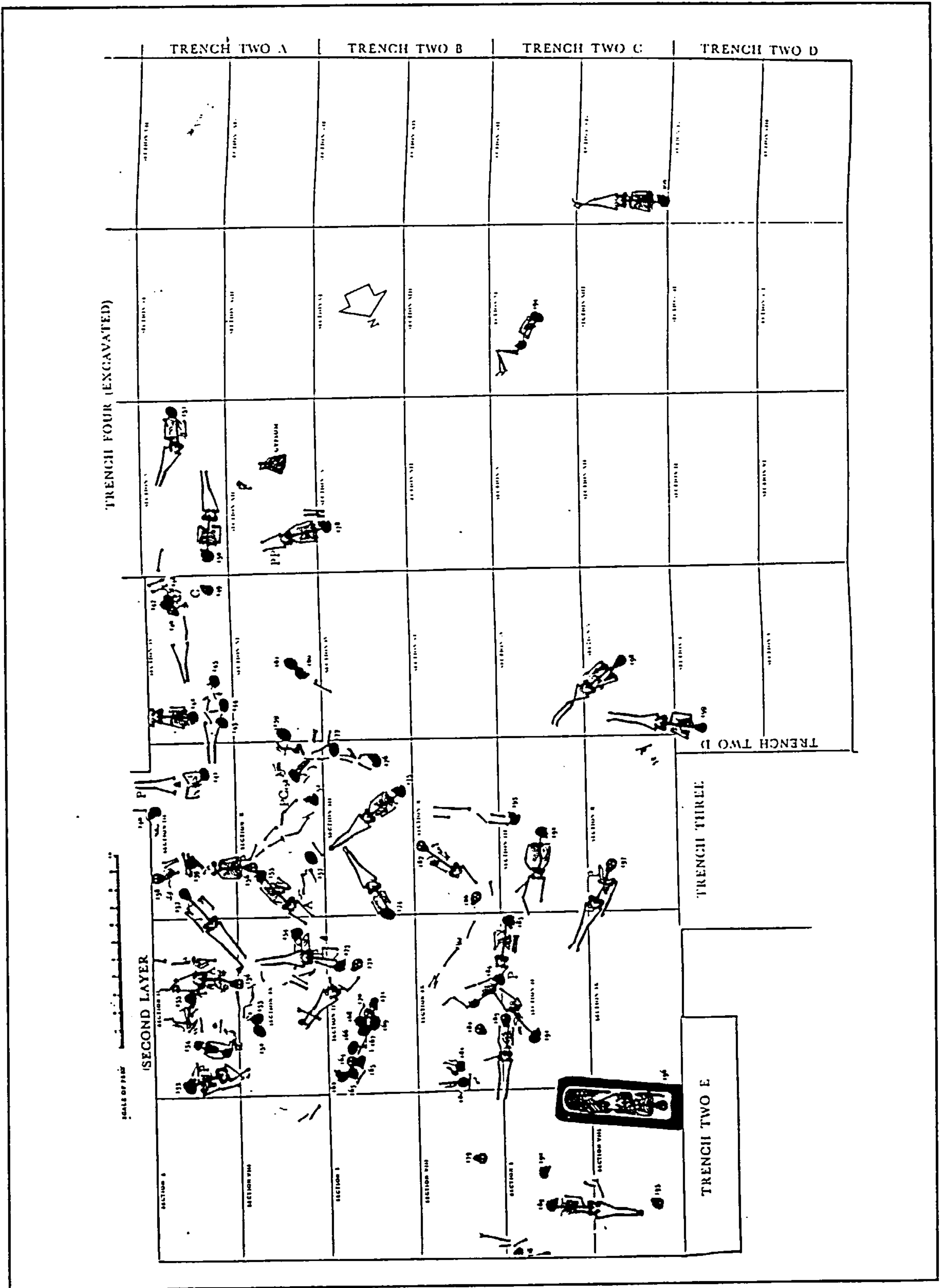


Location of the cemetery at Trentholme Drive, York (after Wenham 1968)

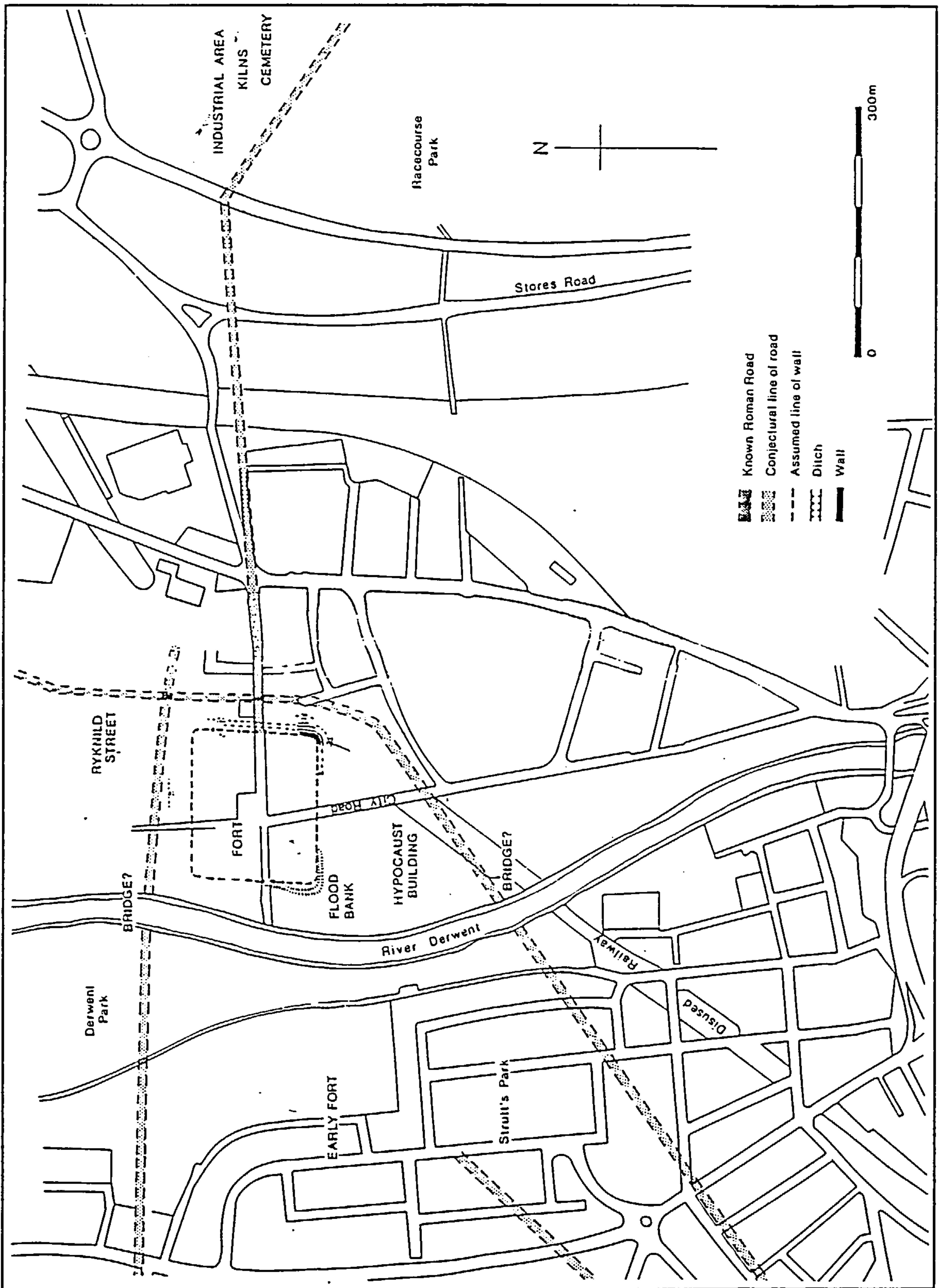




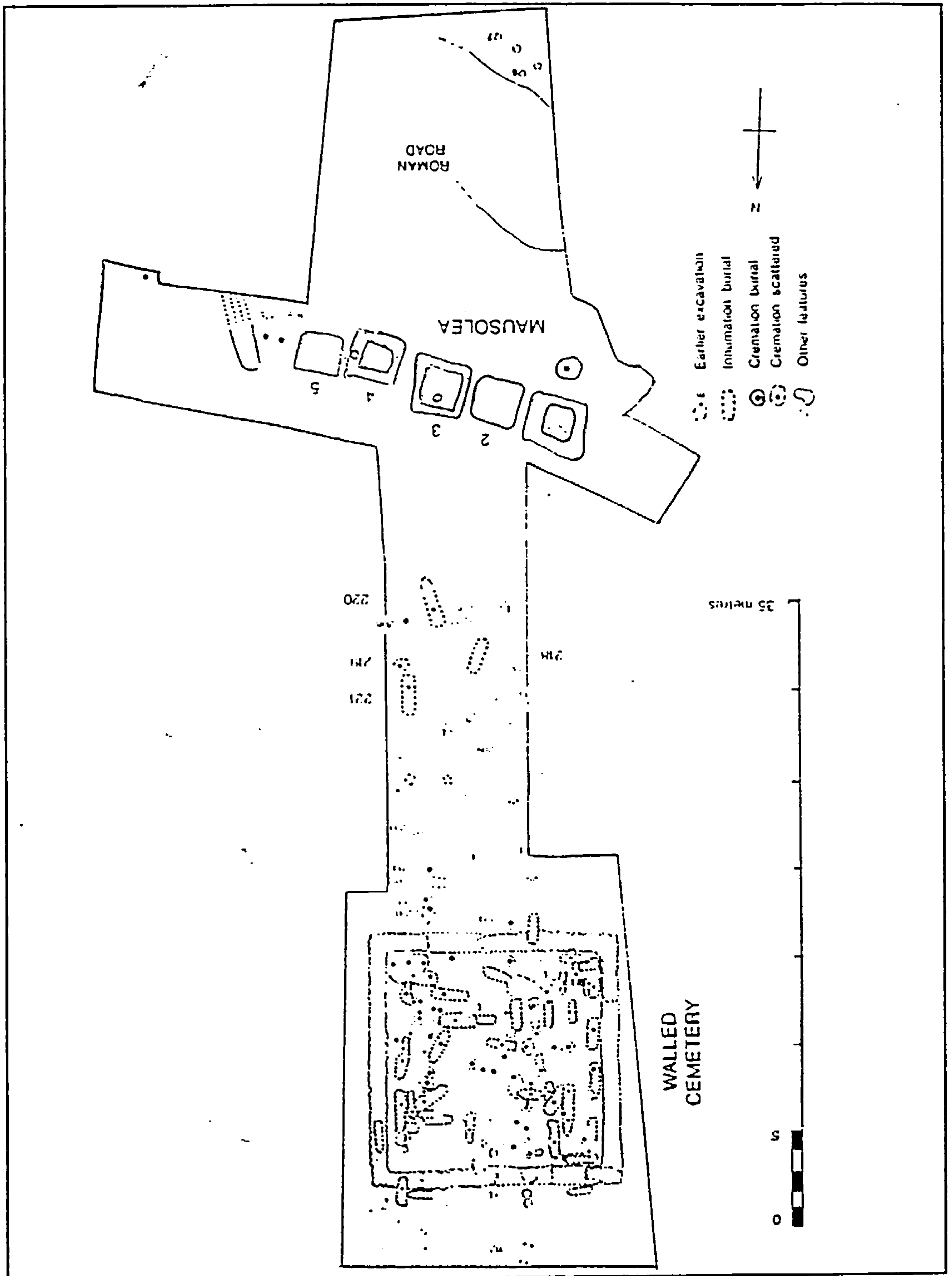
Plan of the cemetery at Trentholme Drive, York, 'first layer' (after Wenham 1968)



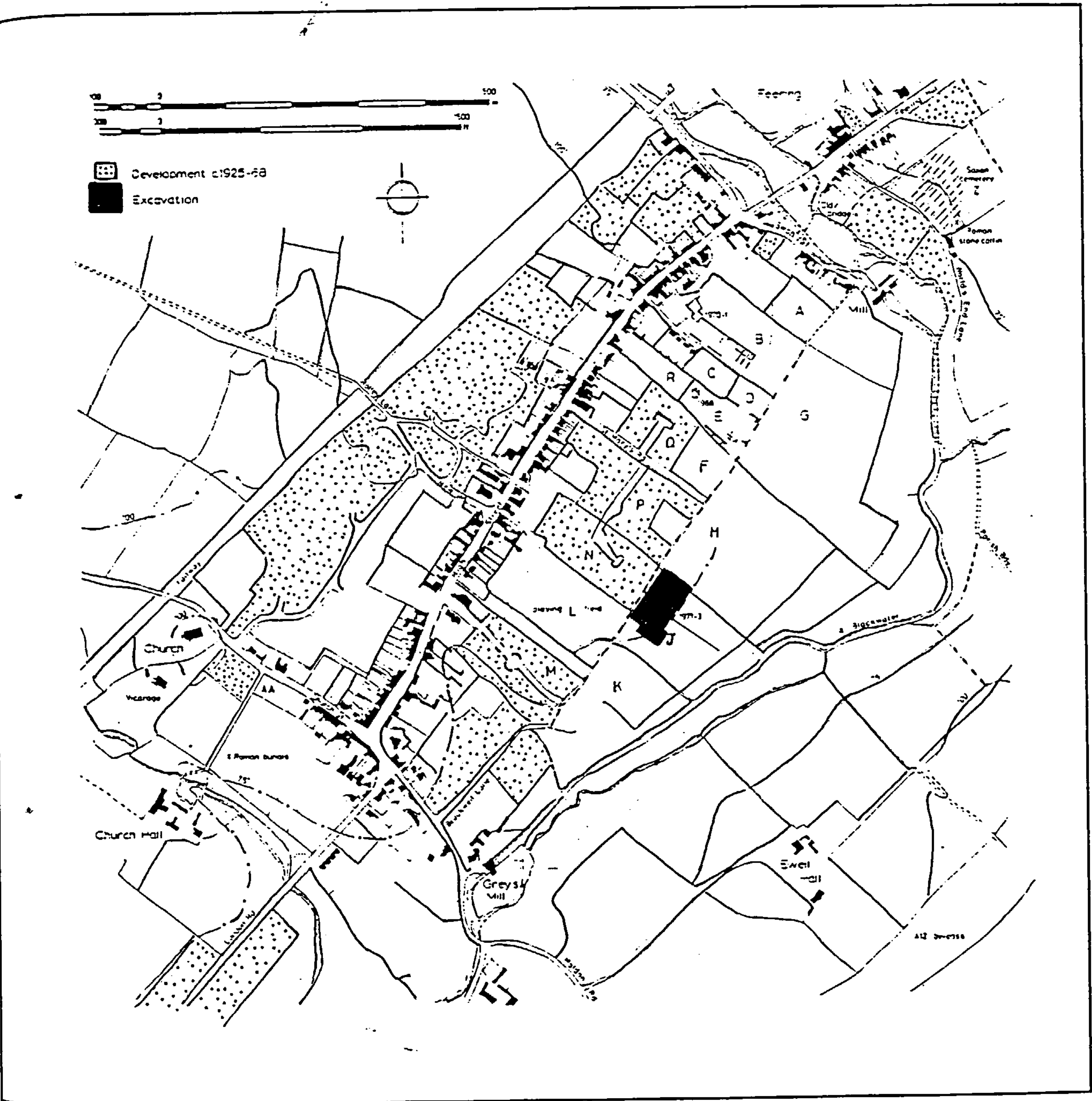
Plan of the cemetery at Trentholme Drive, York, 'second layer' (after Wenham 1968)



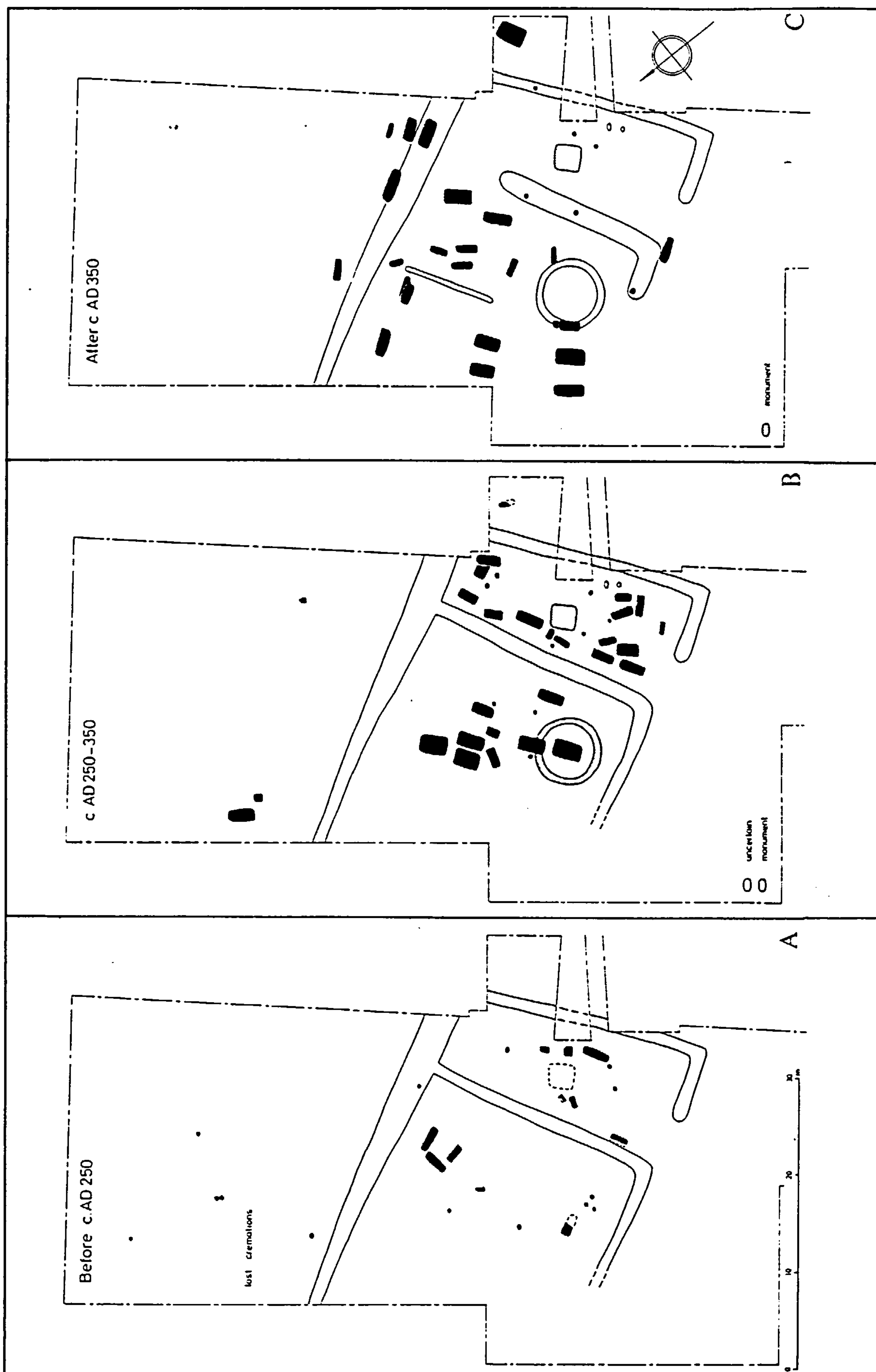
Location of the cemetery at the Derby Race Course, Derby (after Wheeler *et al.* 1985)



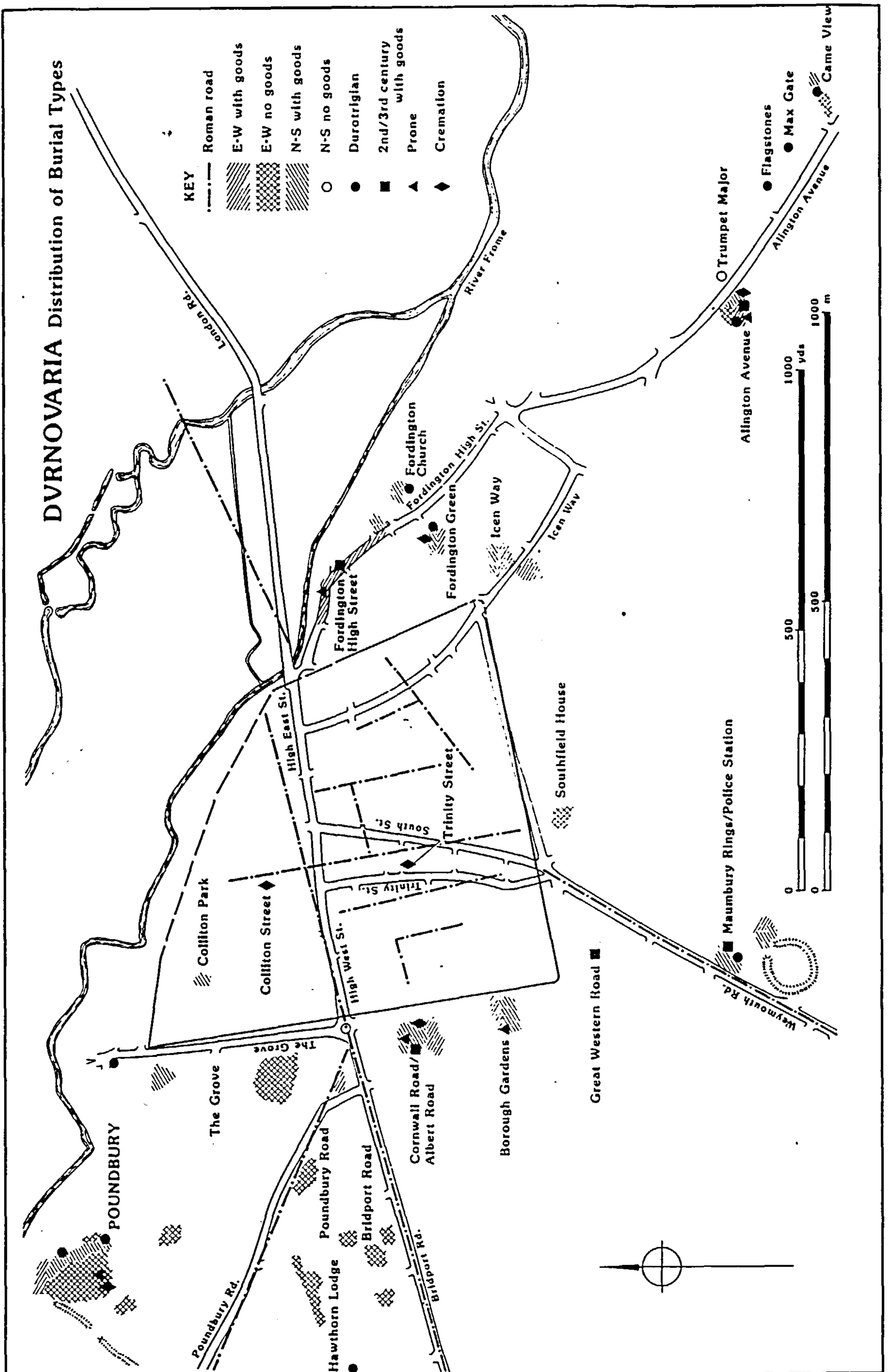
Plan of the cemetery at the Derby Race Course, Derby (Wheeler *et al.* 1985)



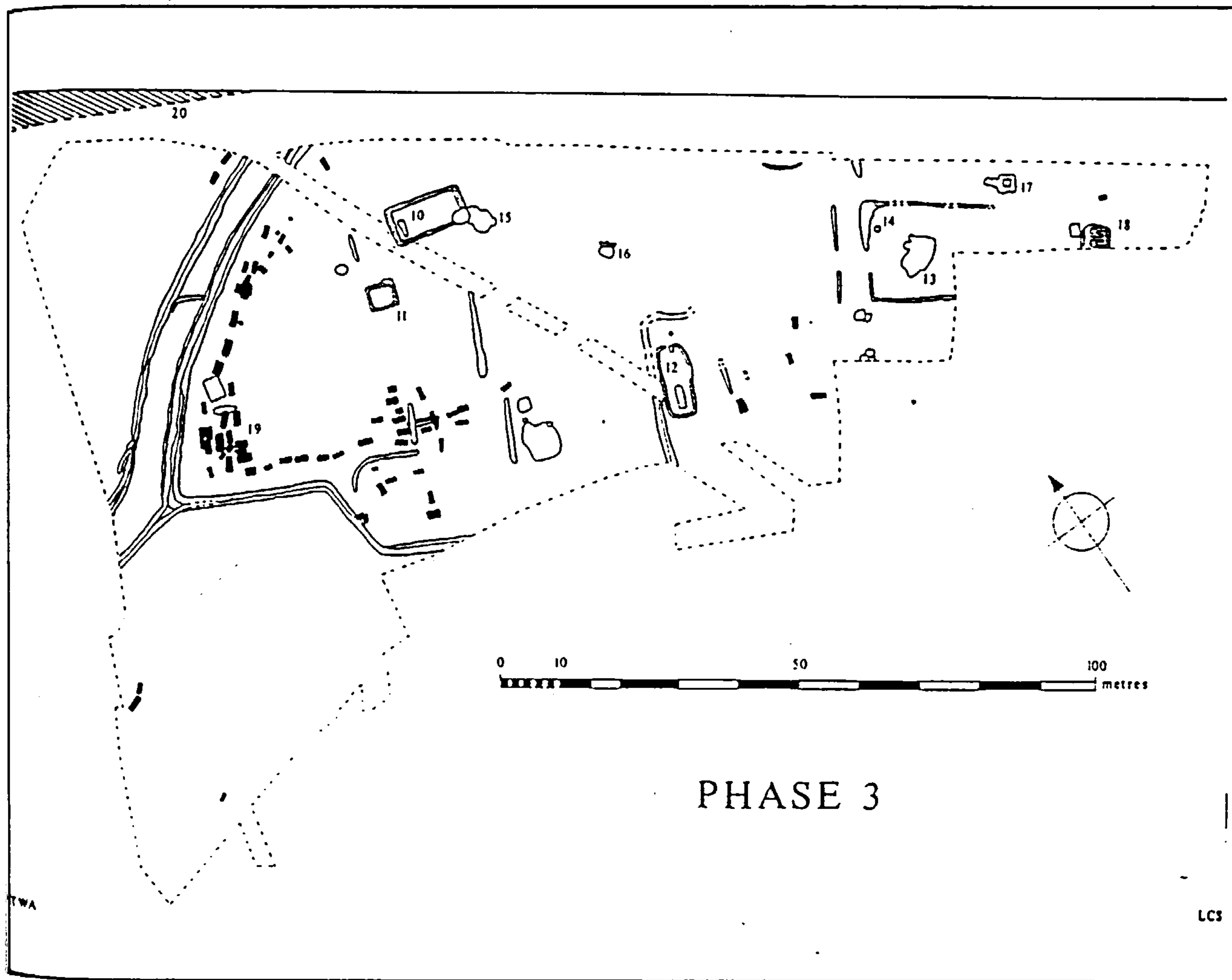
Location of Area 'J', Kelvedon (after Rodwell 1987)



Plan of Area 'J', Kelvedon (after Rodwell 1987)

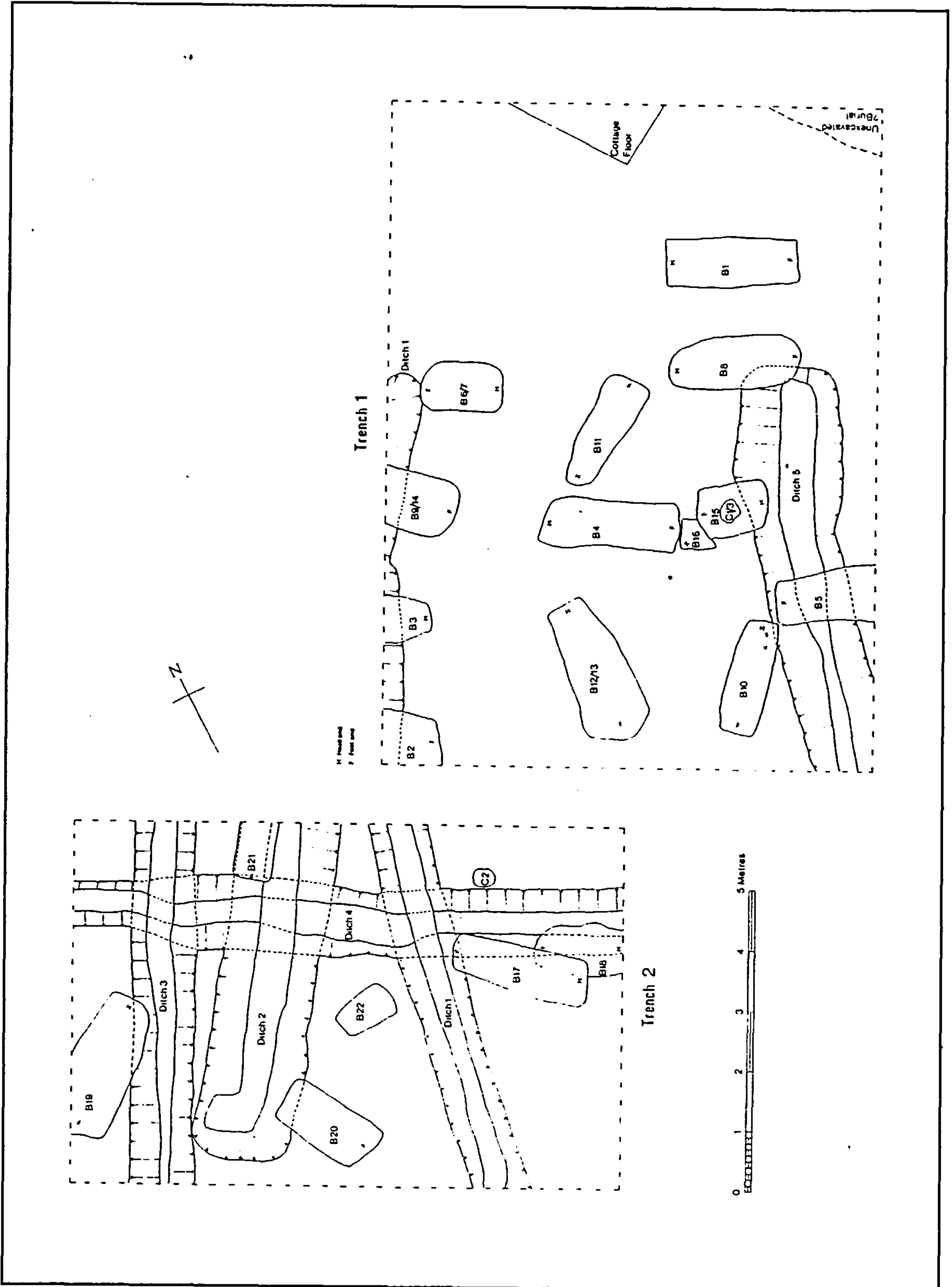


Distribution of cemeteries at Dorchester (after Farwell & Molleson 1993)

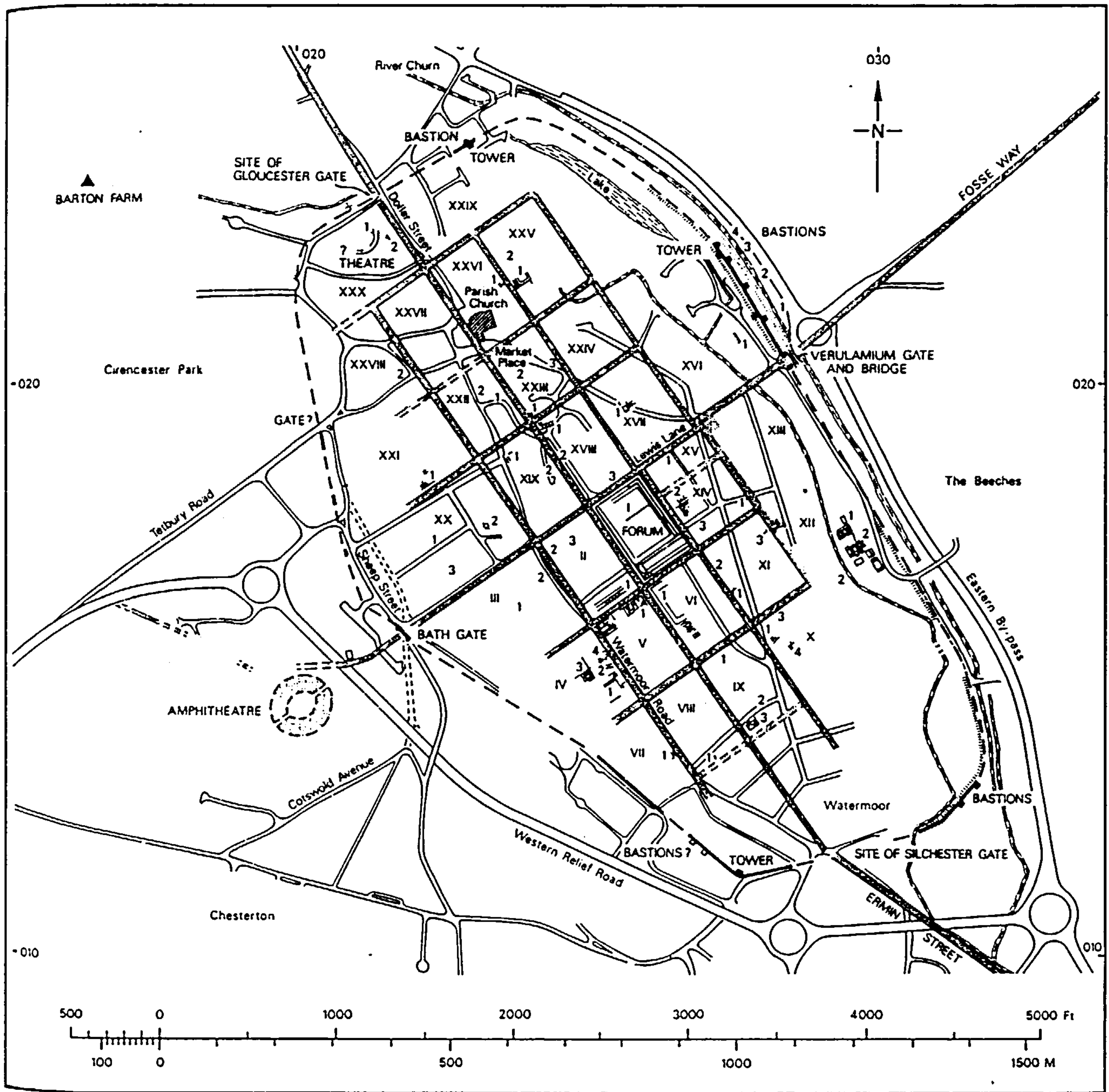


Location of the cemetery at Alington Avenue, Fordington, Dorchester (after Davies *et al.* 1985)

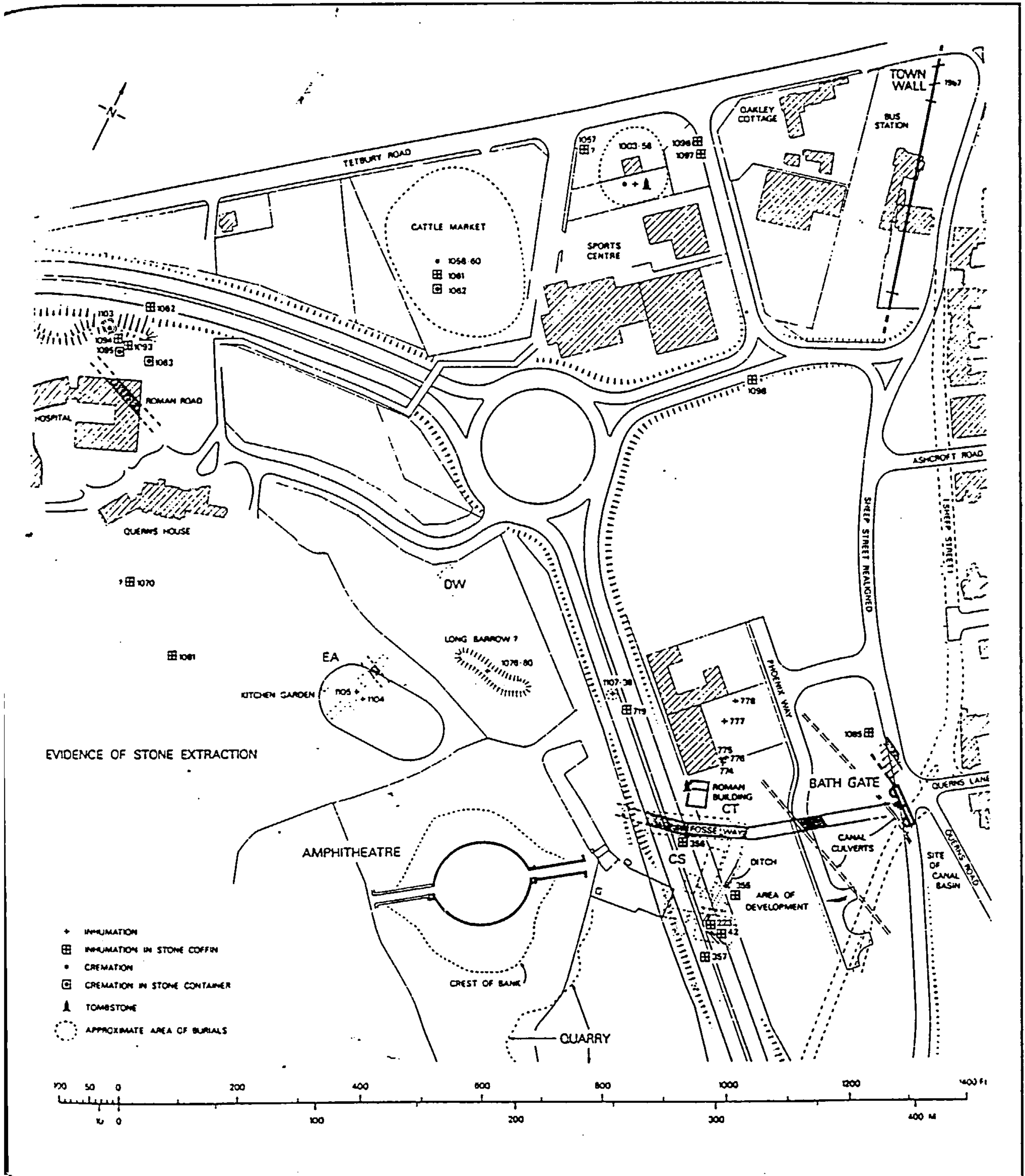




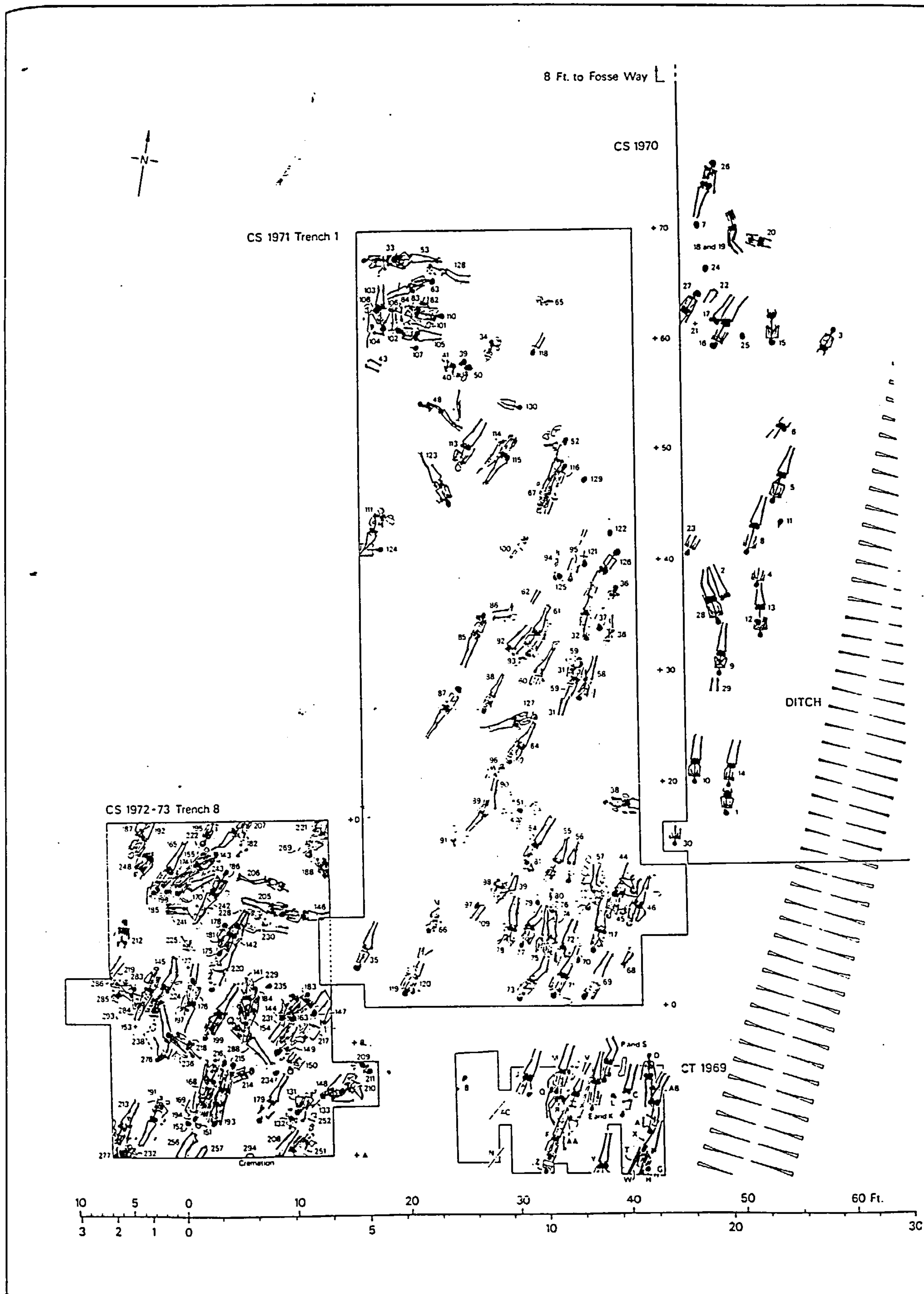
Plan of the cemetery at the Old Vicarage, Fordington, Dorchester (after Startin 1981)



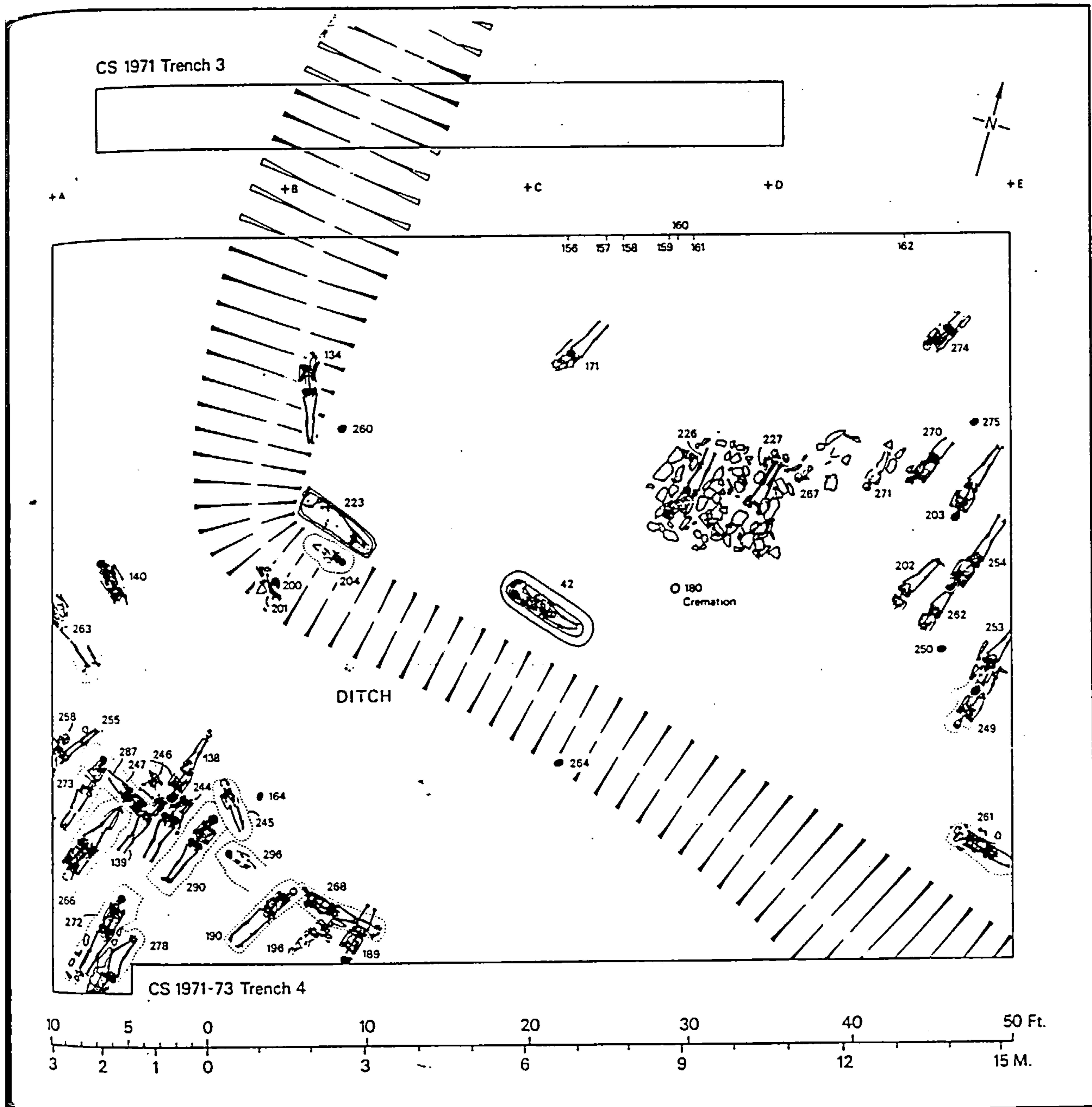
Roman Cirencester (after Mc Whitt *et al.* 1982)



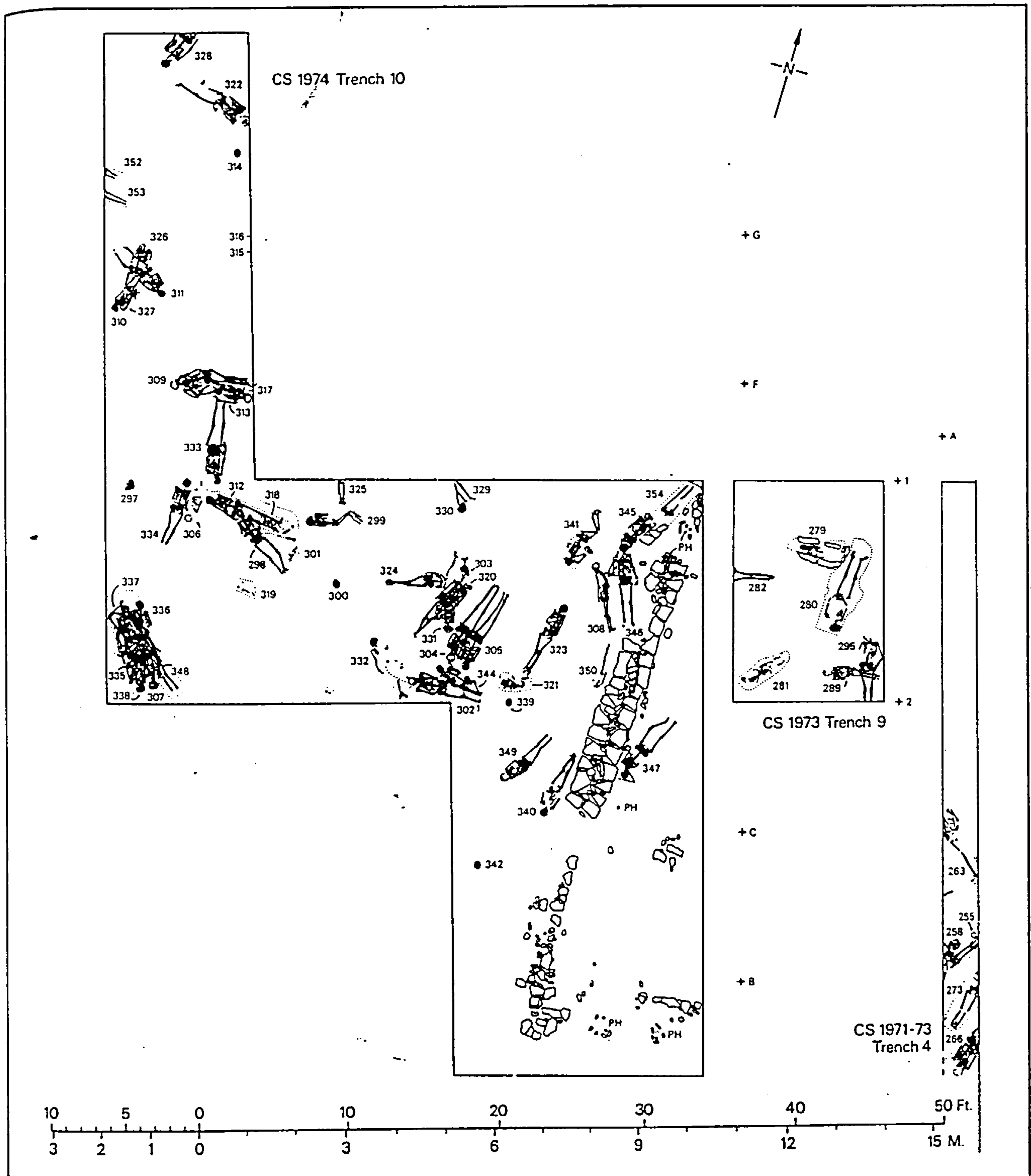
Distribution of cemeteries to the north and west of Cirencester (after Mc Whirr *et al.* 1982)



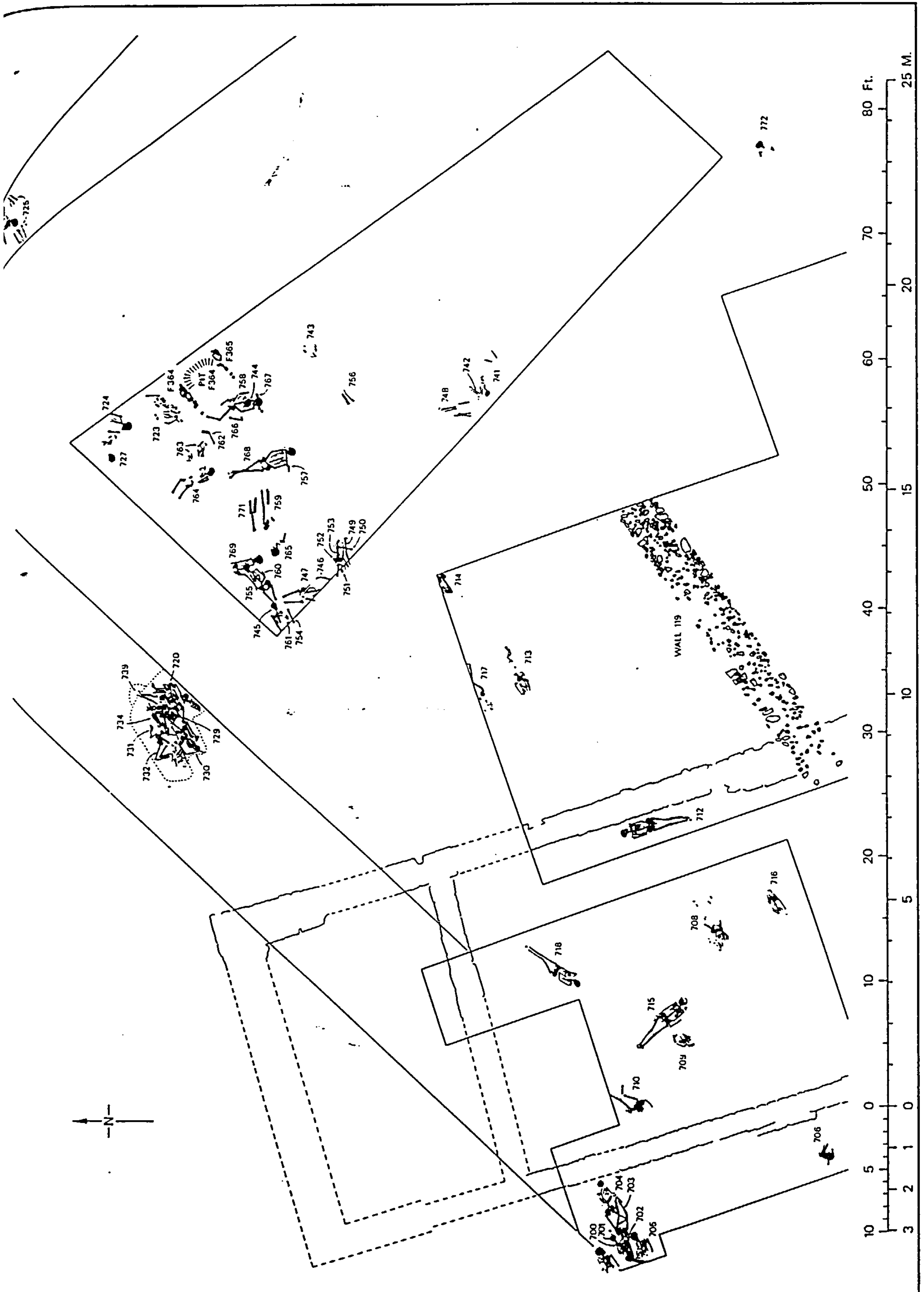
Plan of the cemetery at Bath Gate, Cirencester, CT69 , CS70, 71, 72-3 8 (after Mc Whirr *et al.* 1982)



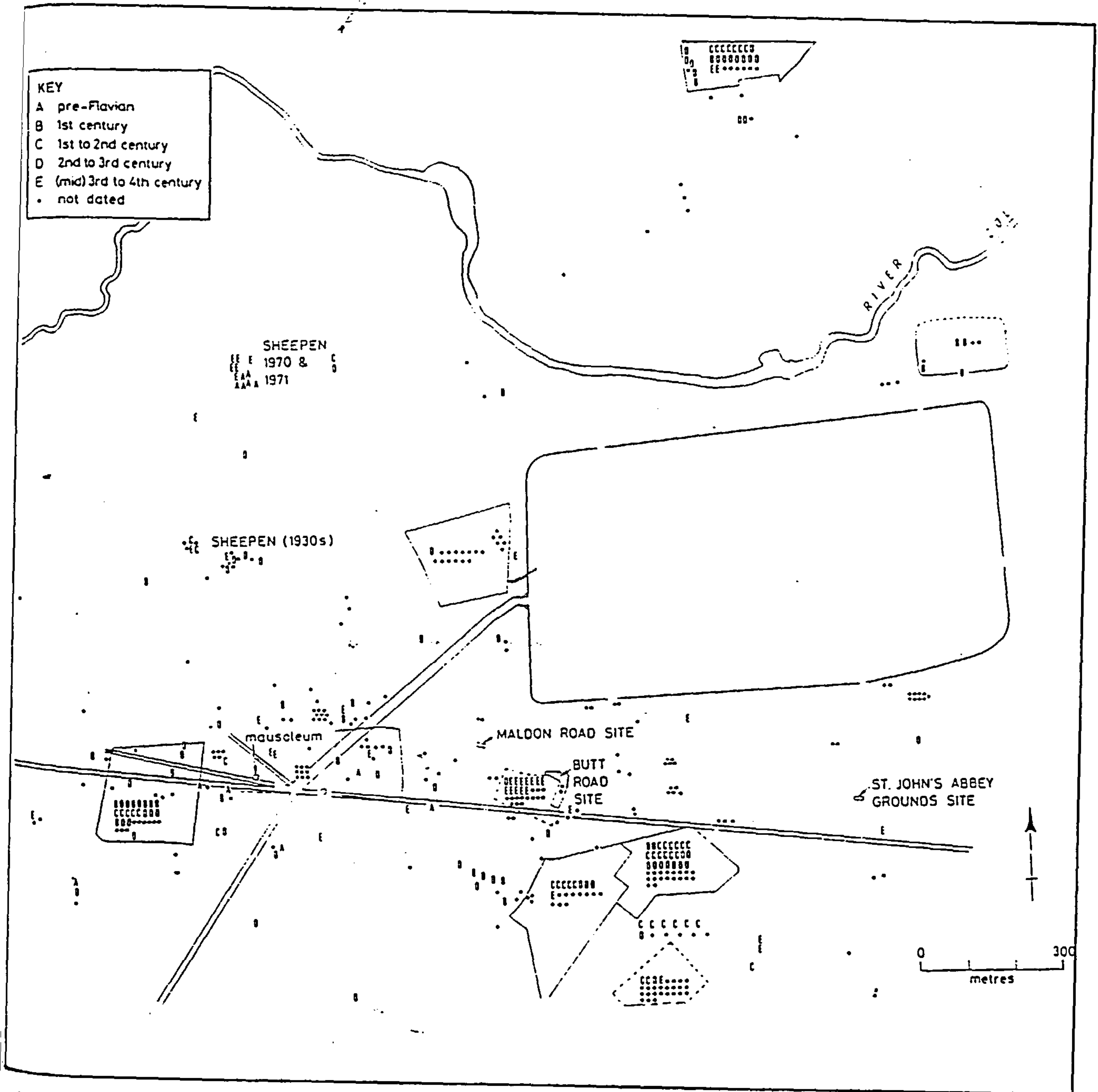
Plan of the cemetery at Bath Gate, Cirencester, CS1971-73 4 (after Mc Whirr *et al.* 1982)



Plan of the cemetery at Bath Gate, Cirencester, CS74 10 (after Mc Whirr *et al.* 1982)

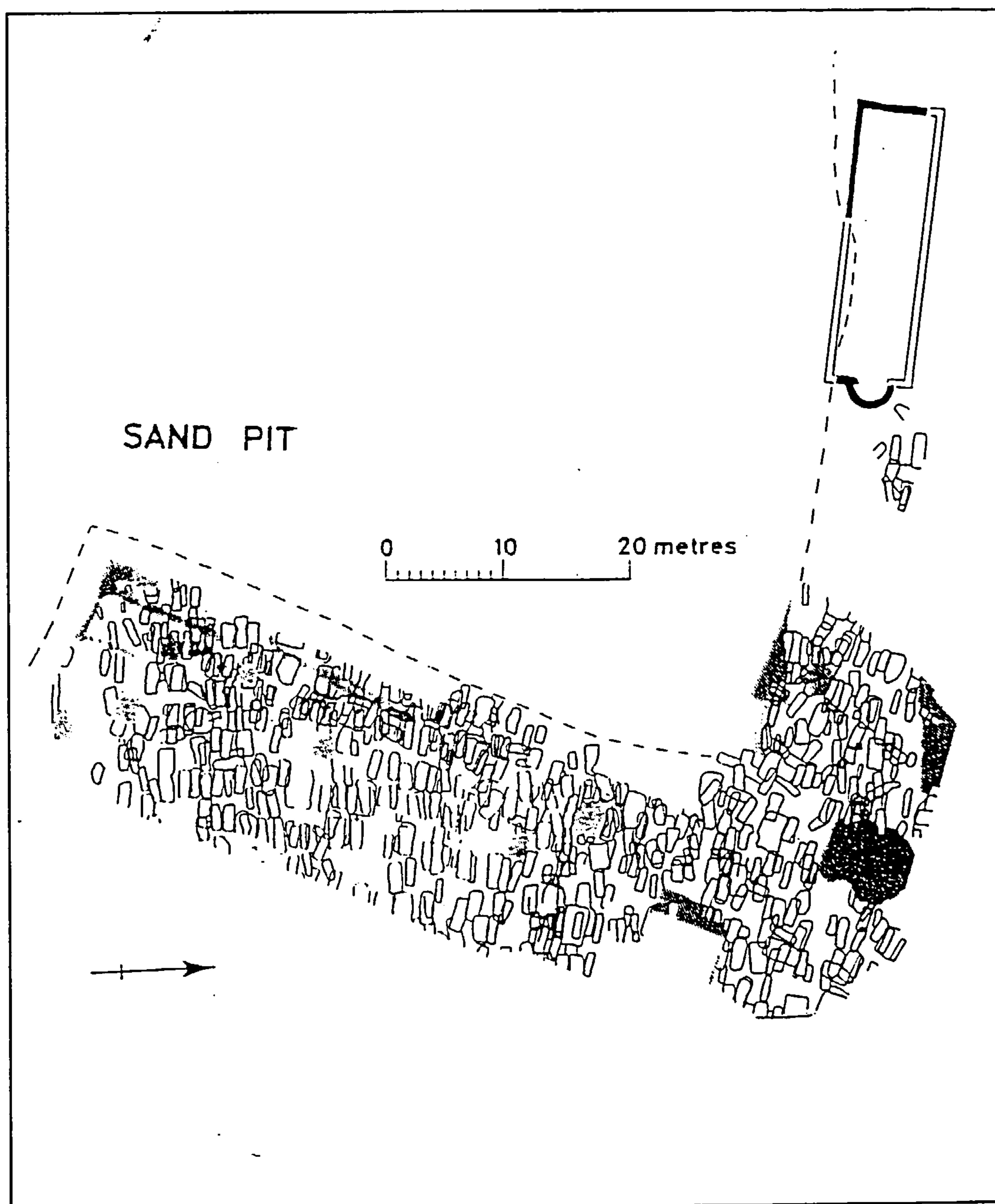


Plan of the cemetery at Bath Gate, Cirencester, CT (after Mc Whirr *et al.* 1982)

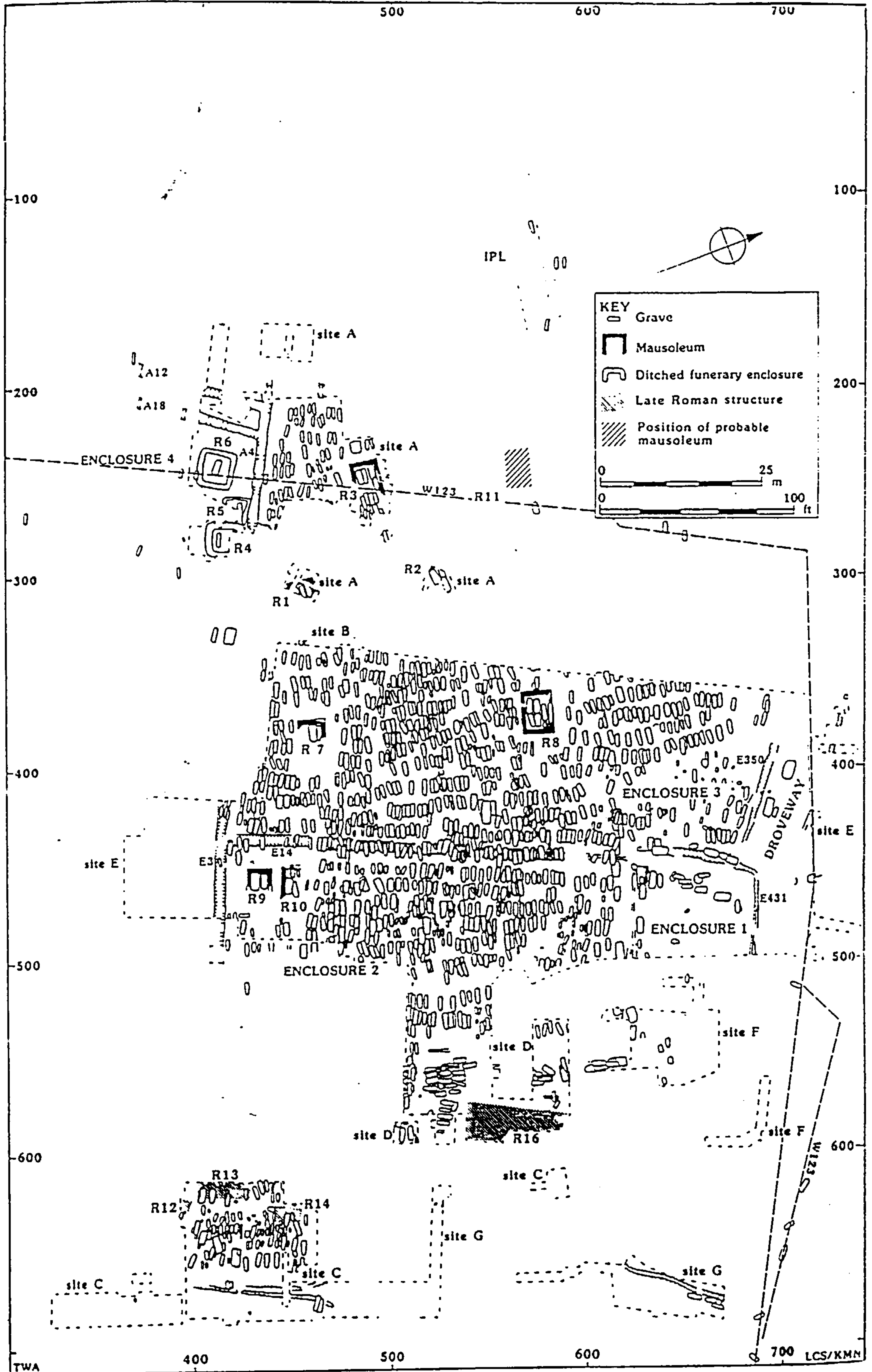


Distribution of cemeteries around Colchester (after Crummy *et al.* 1993)

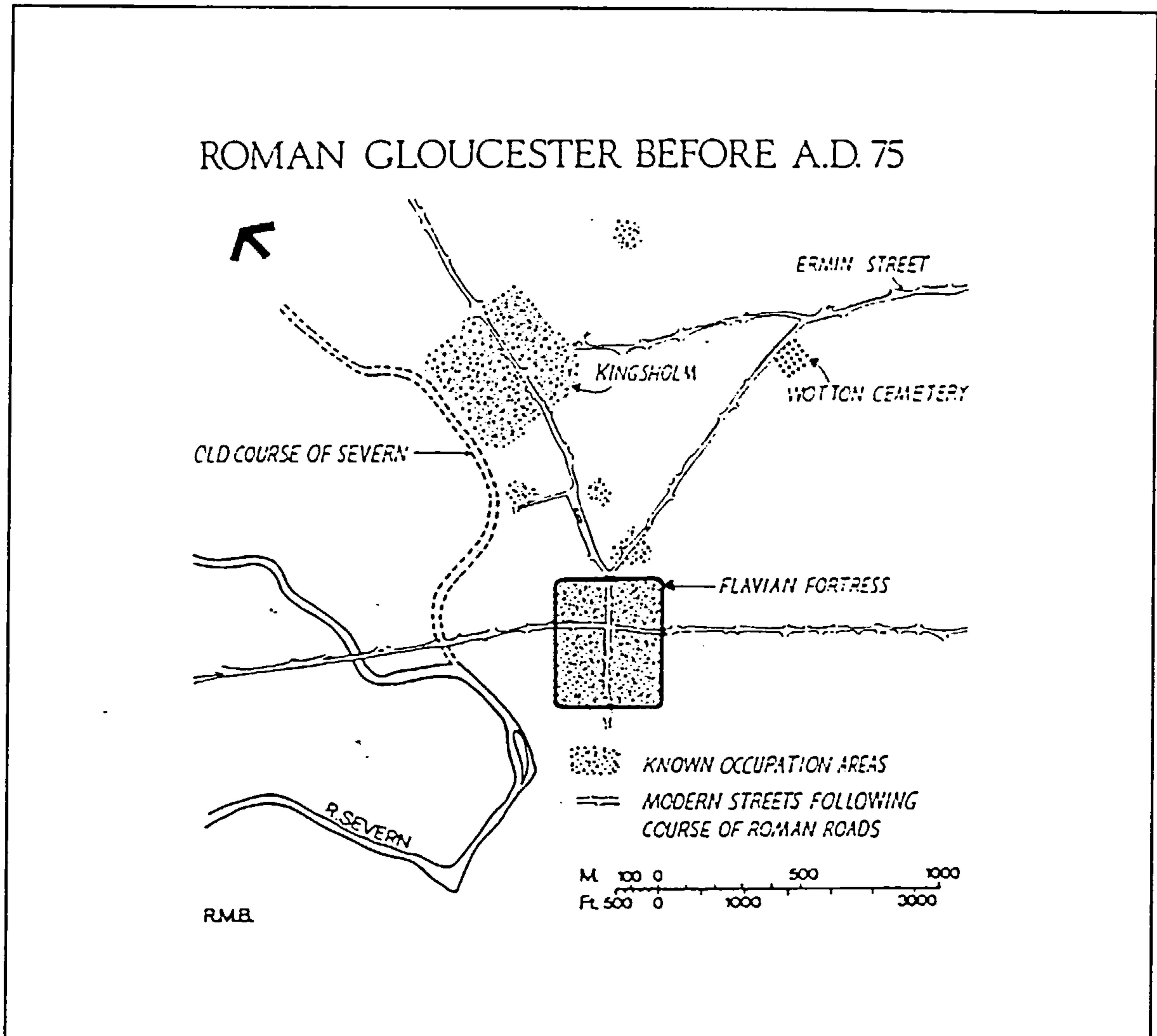




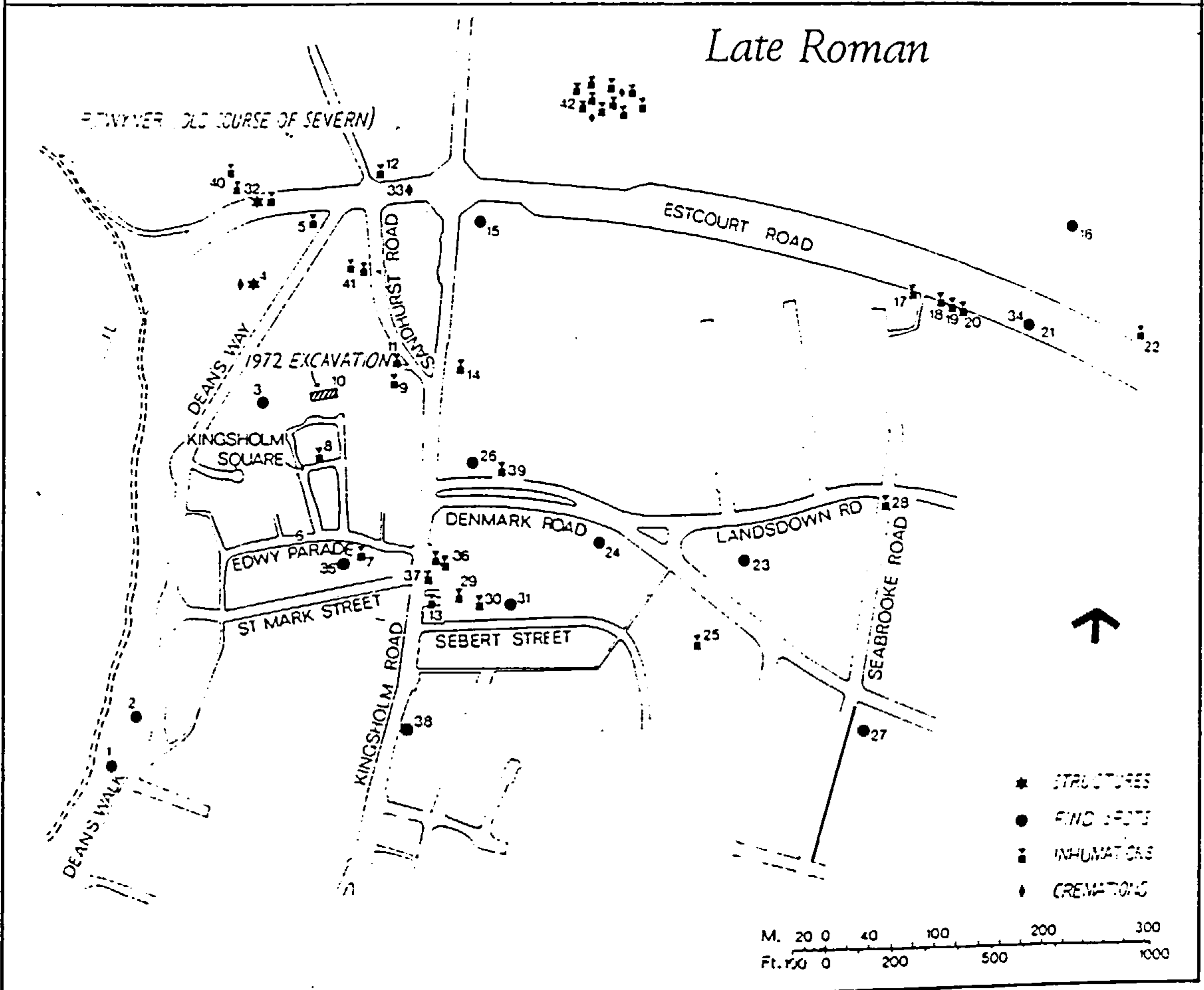
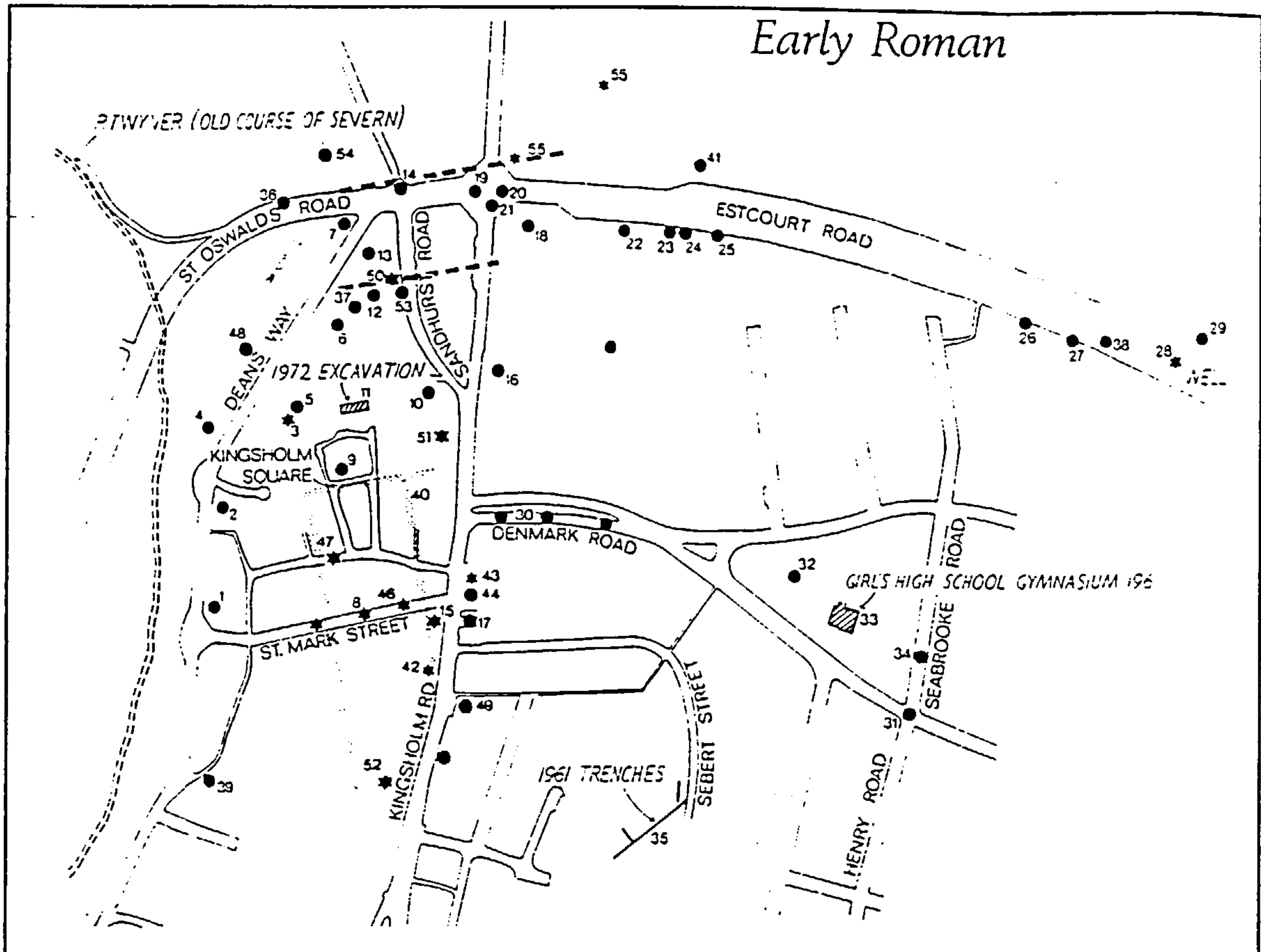
Plan of the cemetery at Butt Road, Colchester (after Crummy *et al.* 1993)



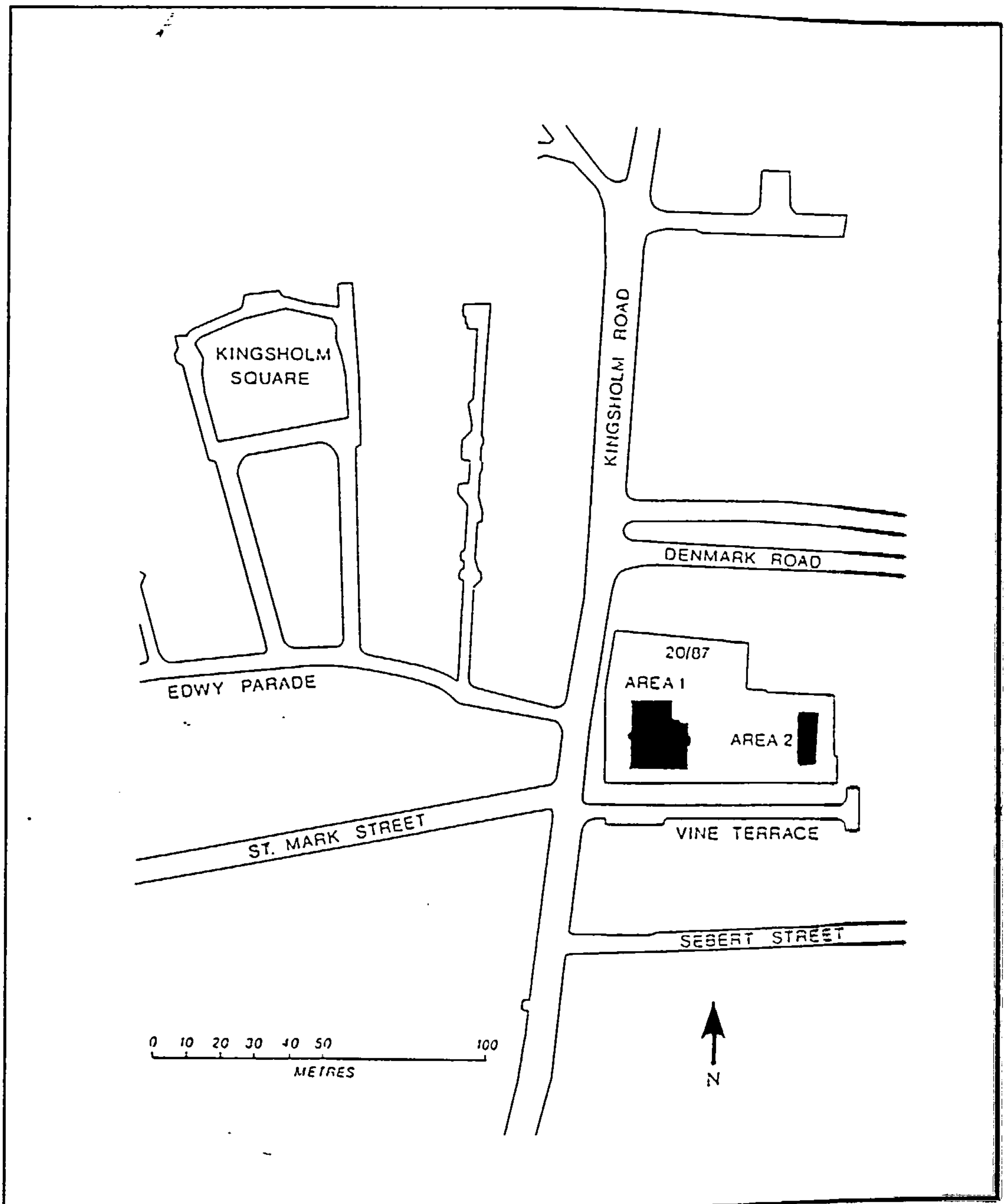
Plan of the cemetery at Poundbury Camp, Dorchester (after Farwell & Molleson 1993)



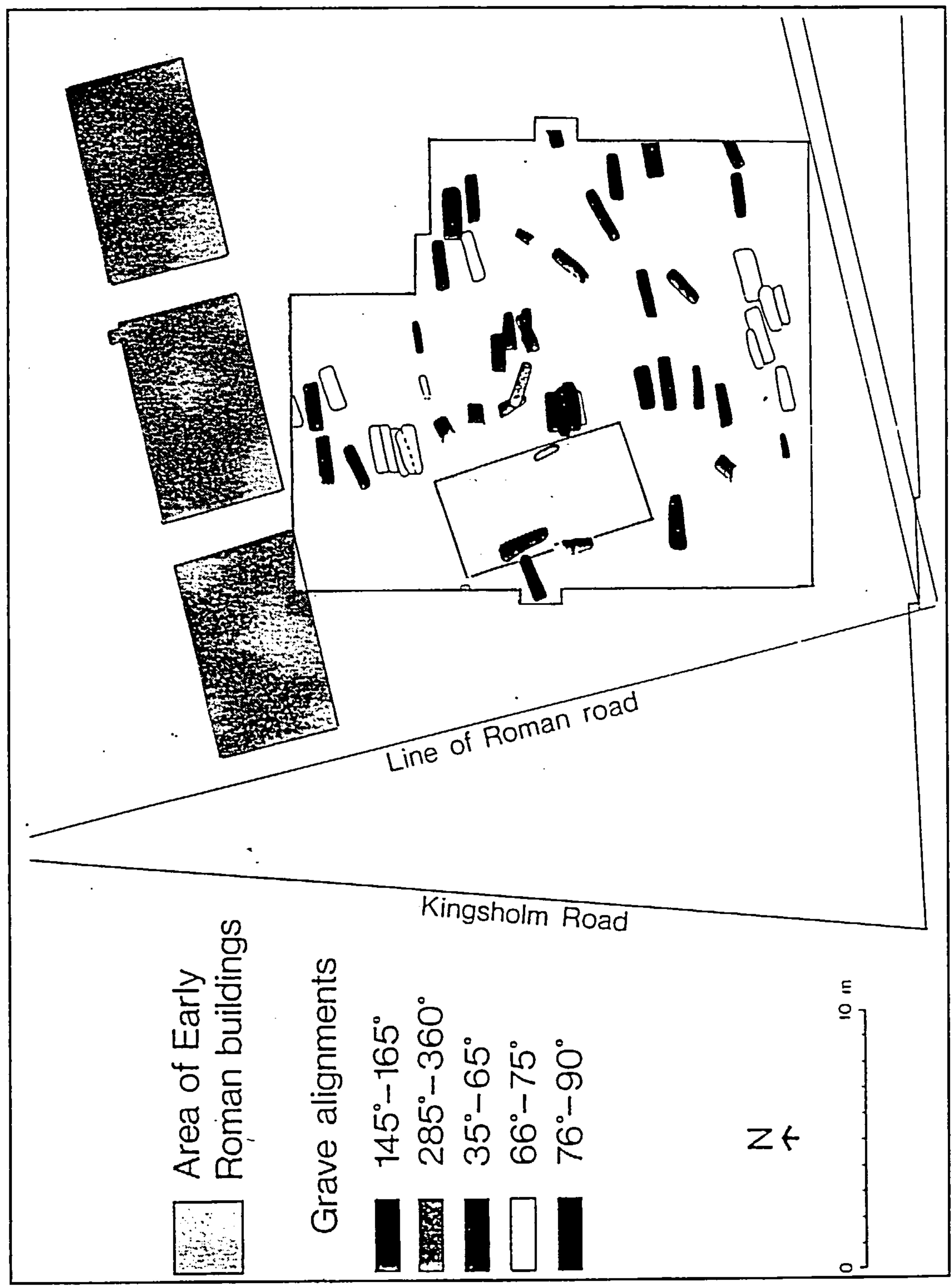
Location of the Kingsholm area, Gloucester (after Hurst 1975)



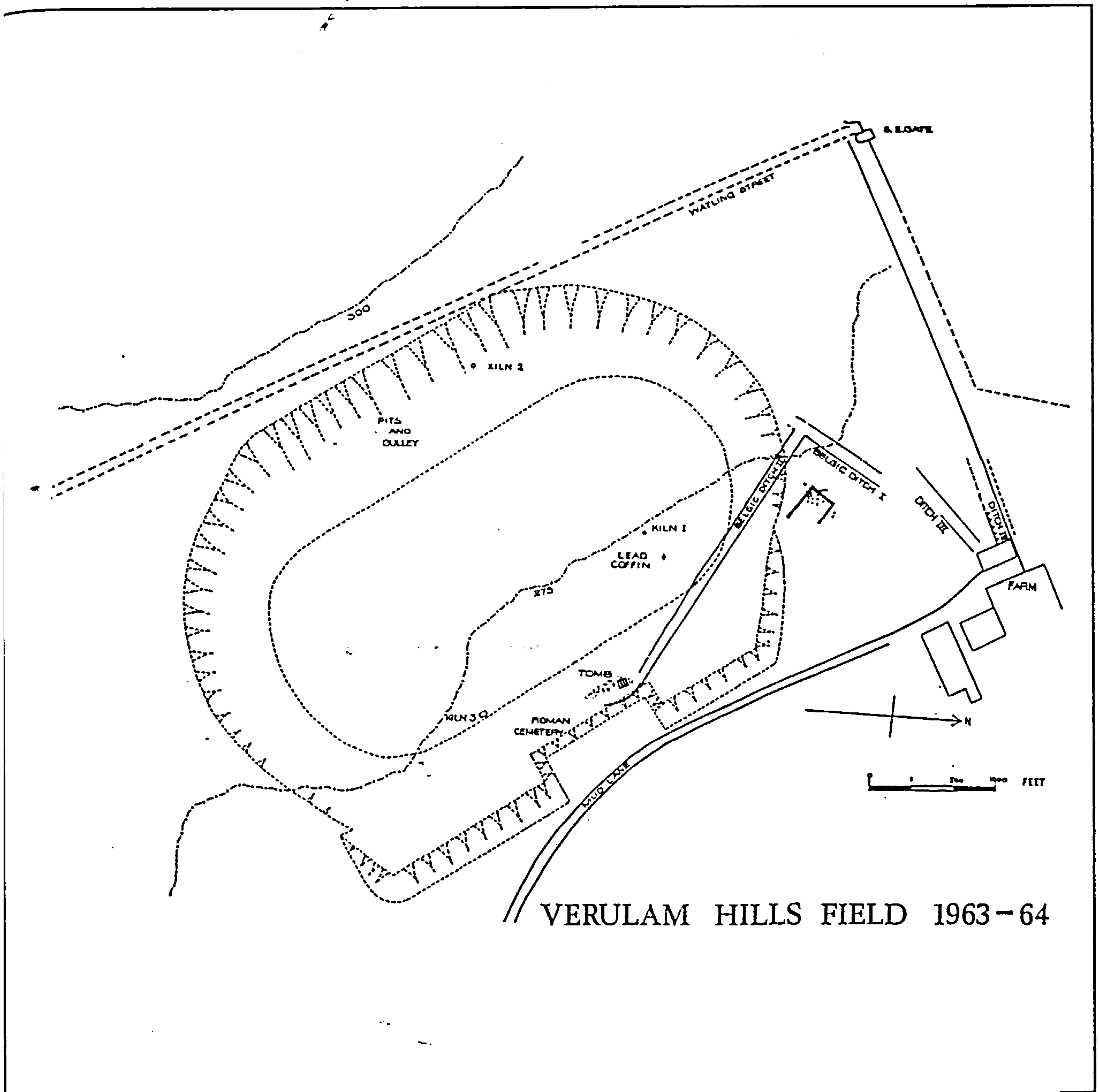
Gloucester, Gambier Parry Lodge (42) & 76 Kingsholm Rd (36) (after Garrod *et al.* 1984)



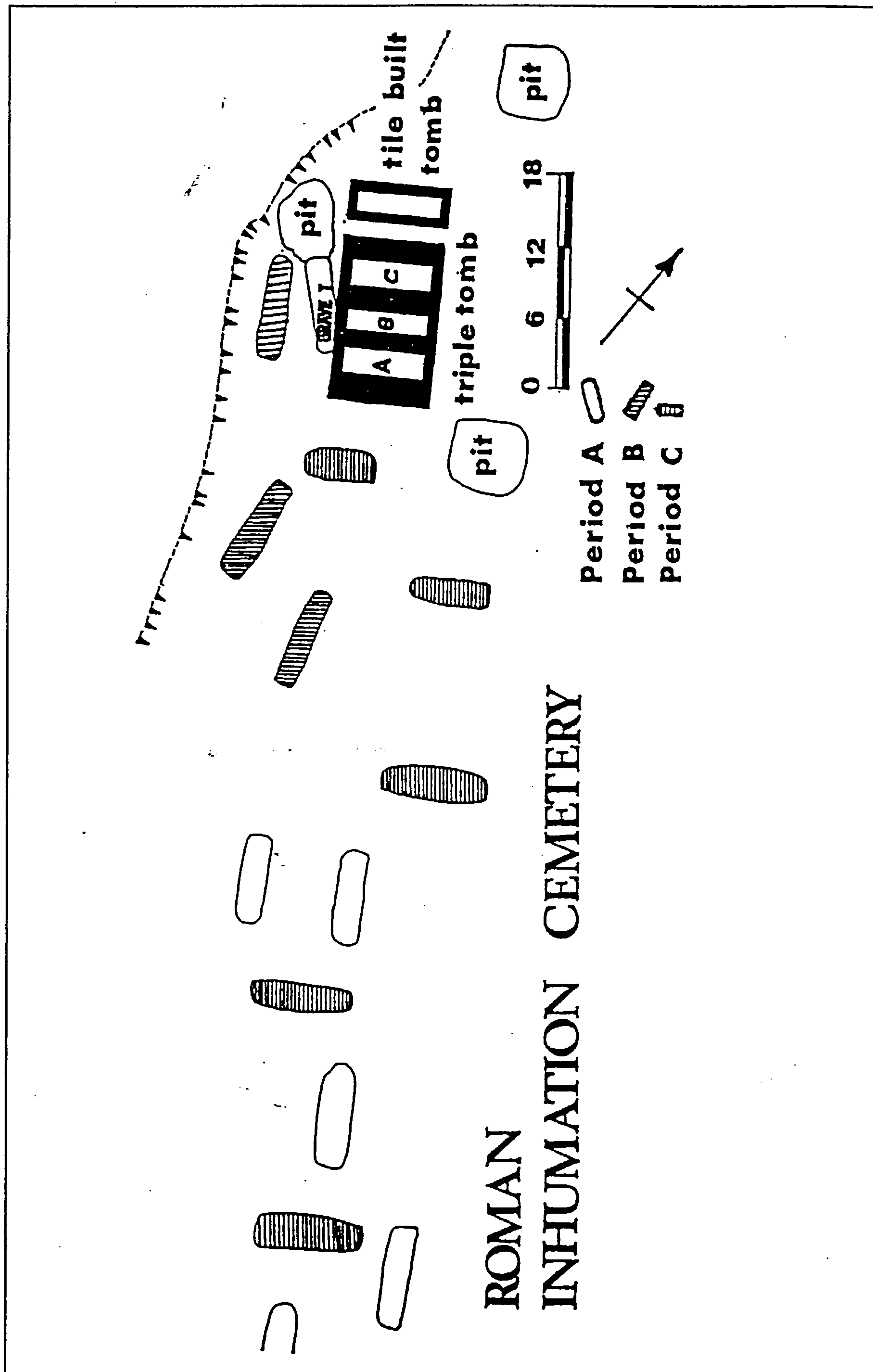
Location of the cemetery at 76, Kingsholm Road, Colchester (after Atkin 1988)



Plan of the cemetery at 76 Kingsholm Road, Gloucester (after Atkin 1987)

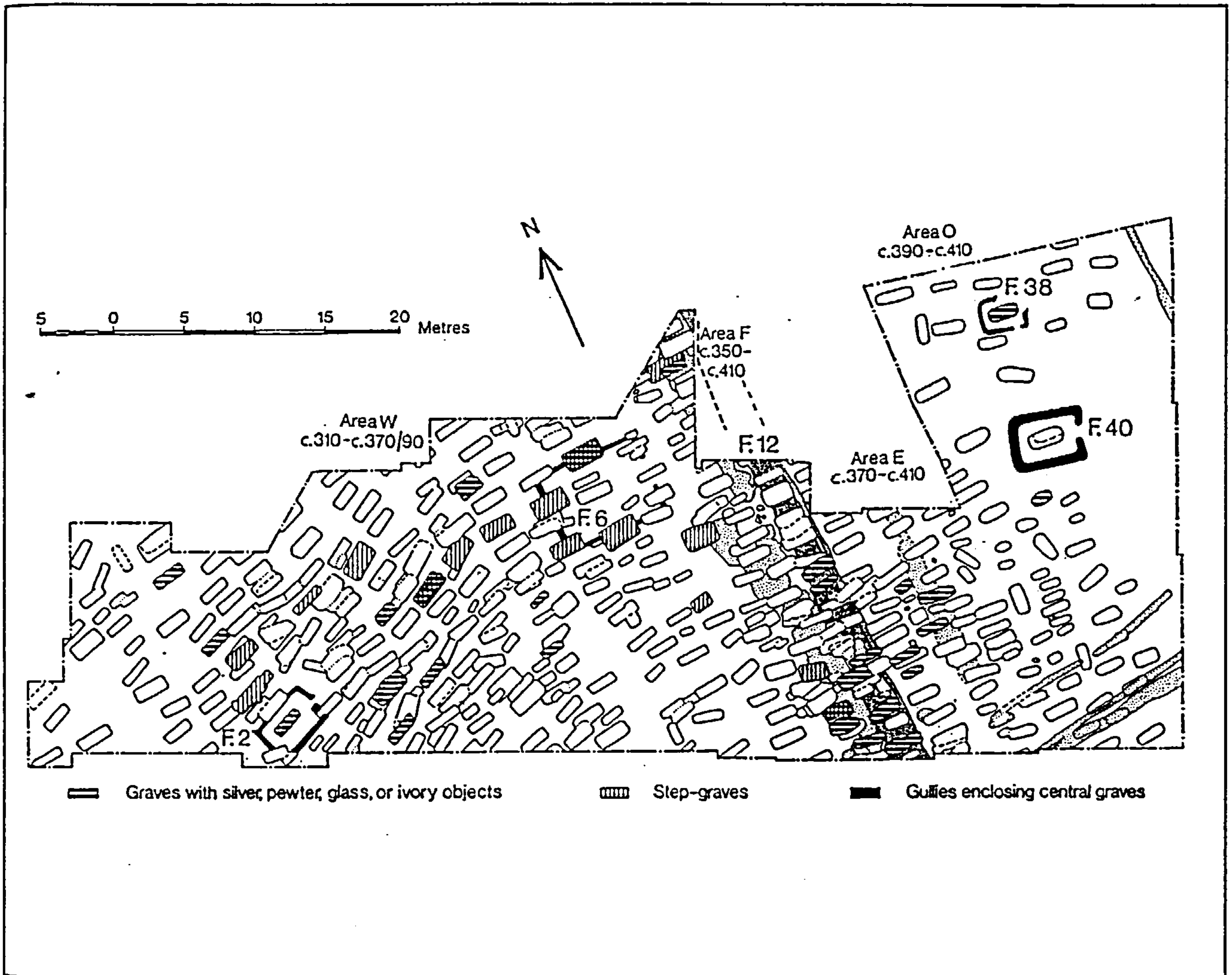


Location of the cemetery at Verulam Hills Field, St. Albans (after Anthony 1968)

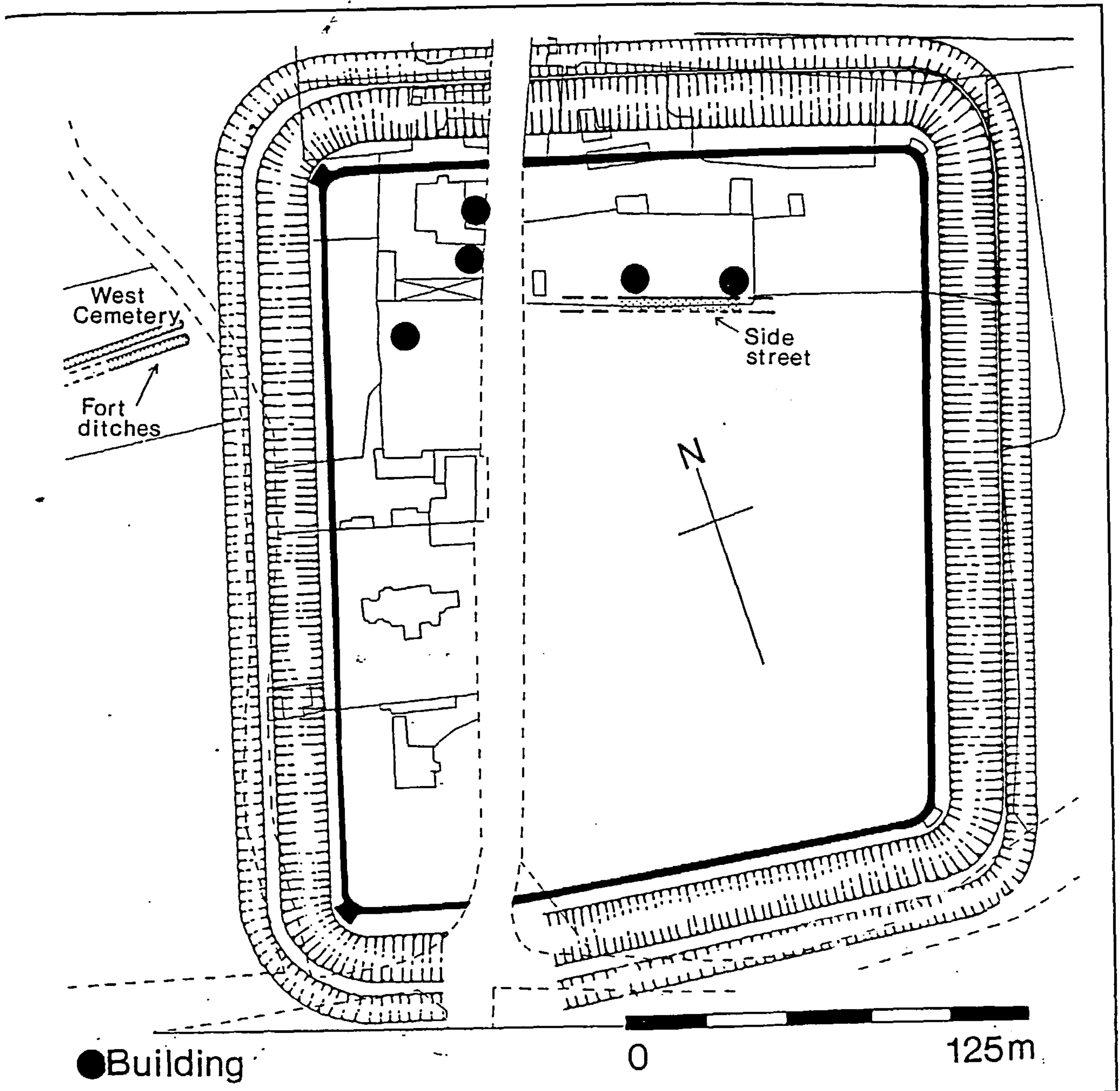


Plan of the cemetery at Verulam Hills Field, St. Albans (after Anthony 1968)

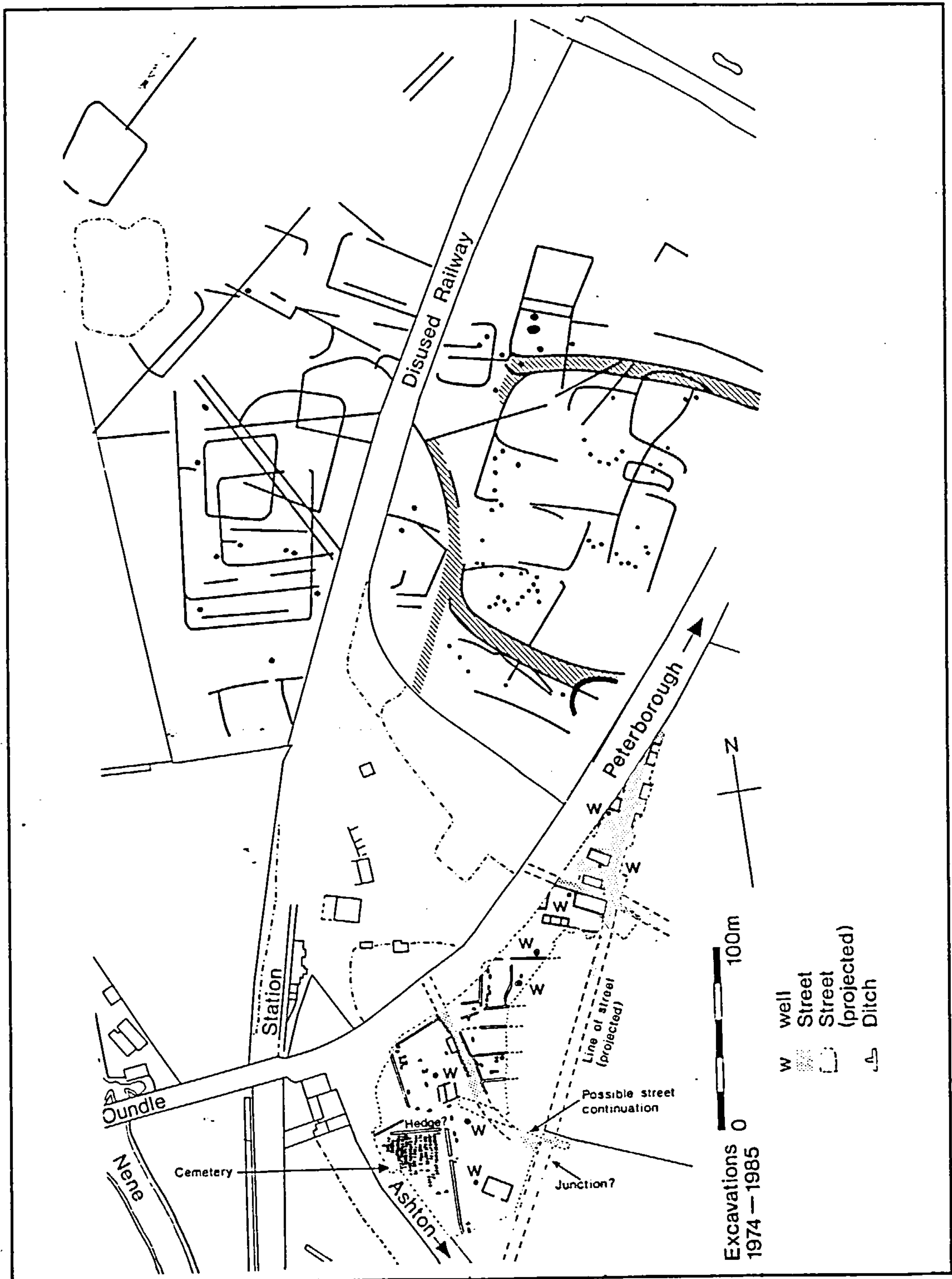




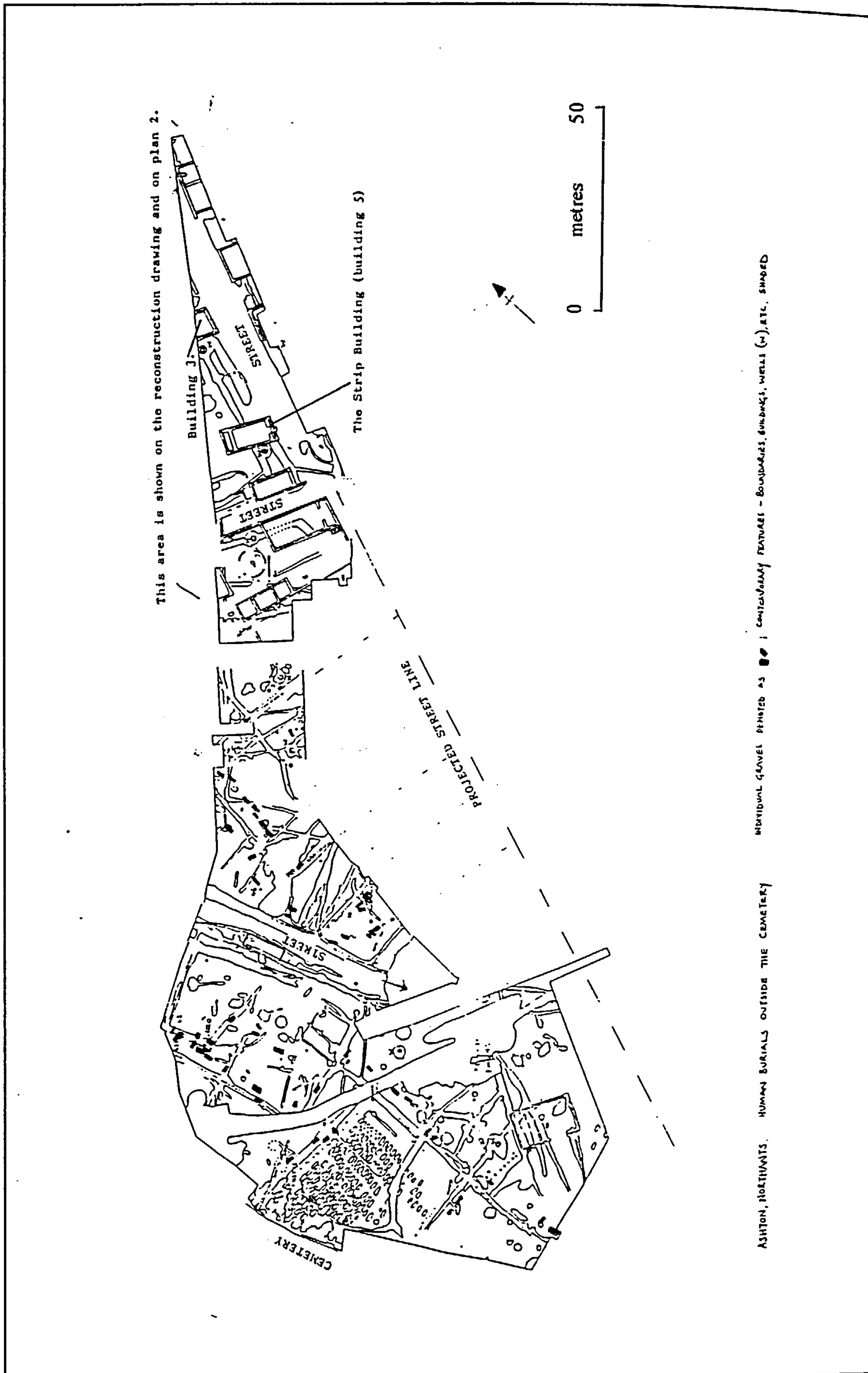
Plan of the cemetery at Lankhills, Winchester (after Clarke 1979)



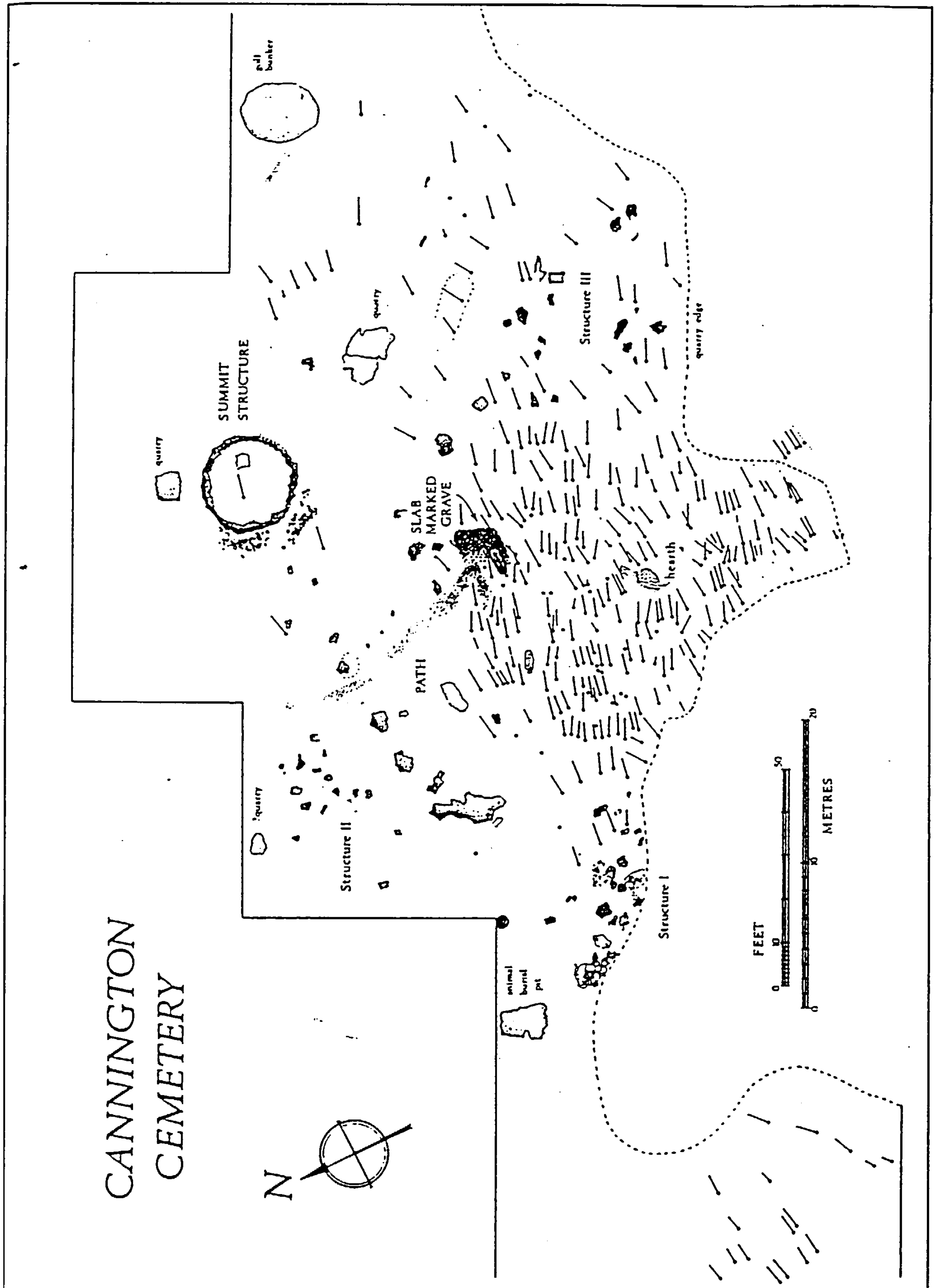
Location of the cemetery at Ancaster (after Todd 1975)



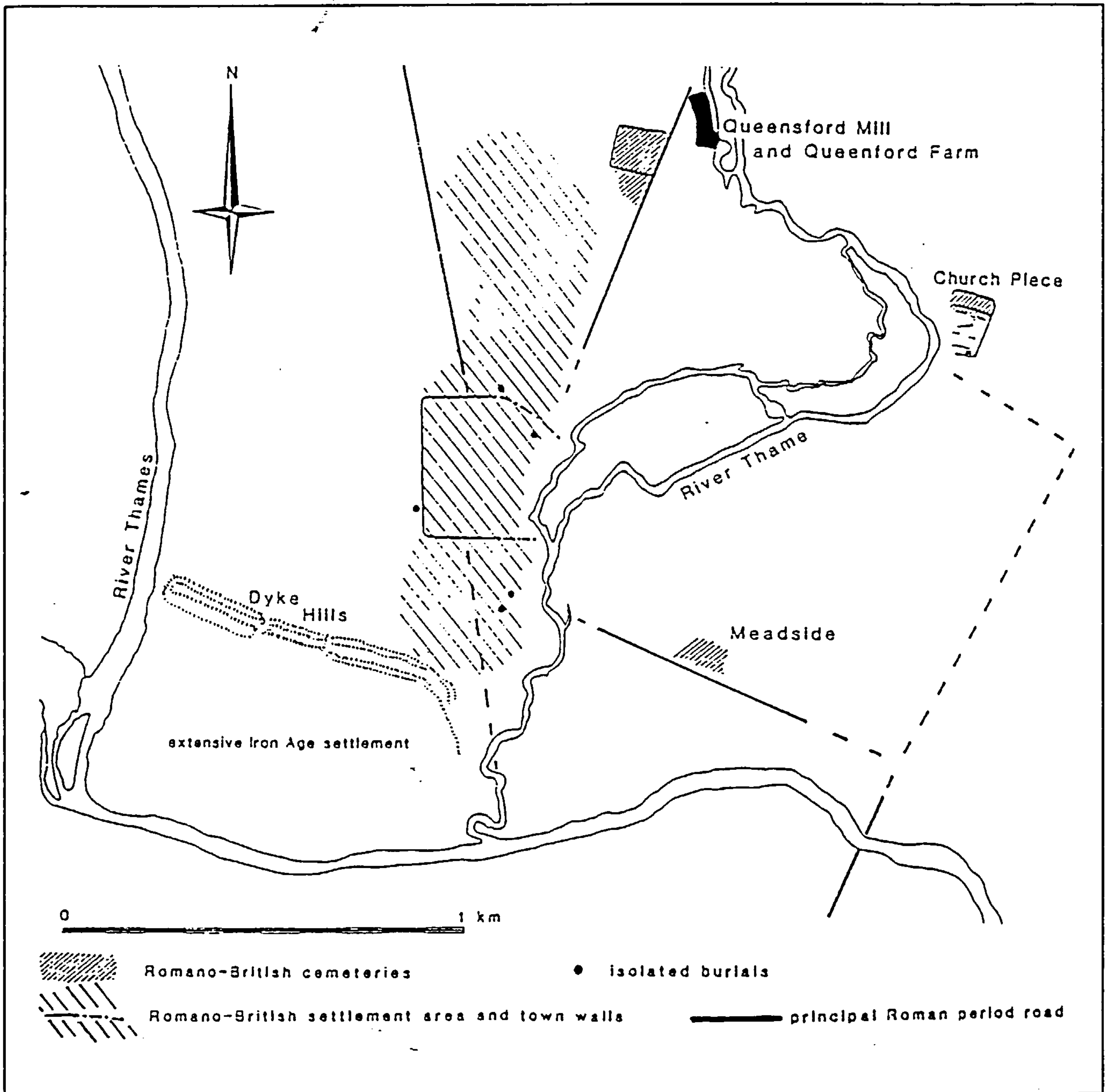
Location of burials at Ashton (after Dix 1983)



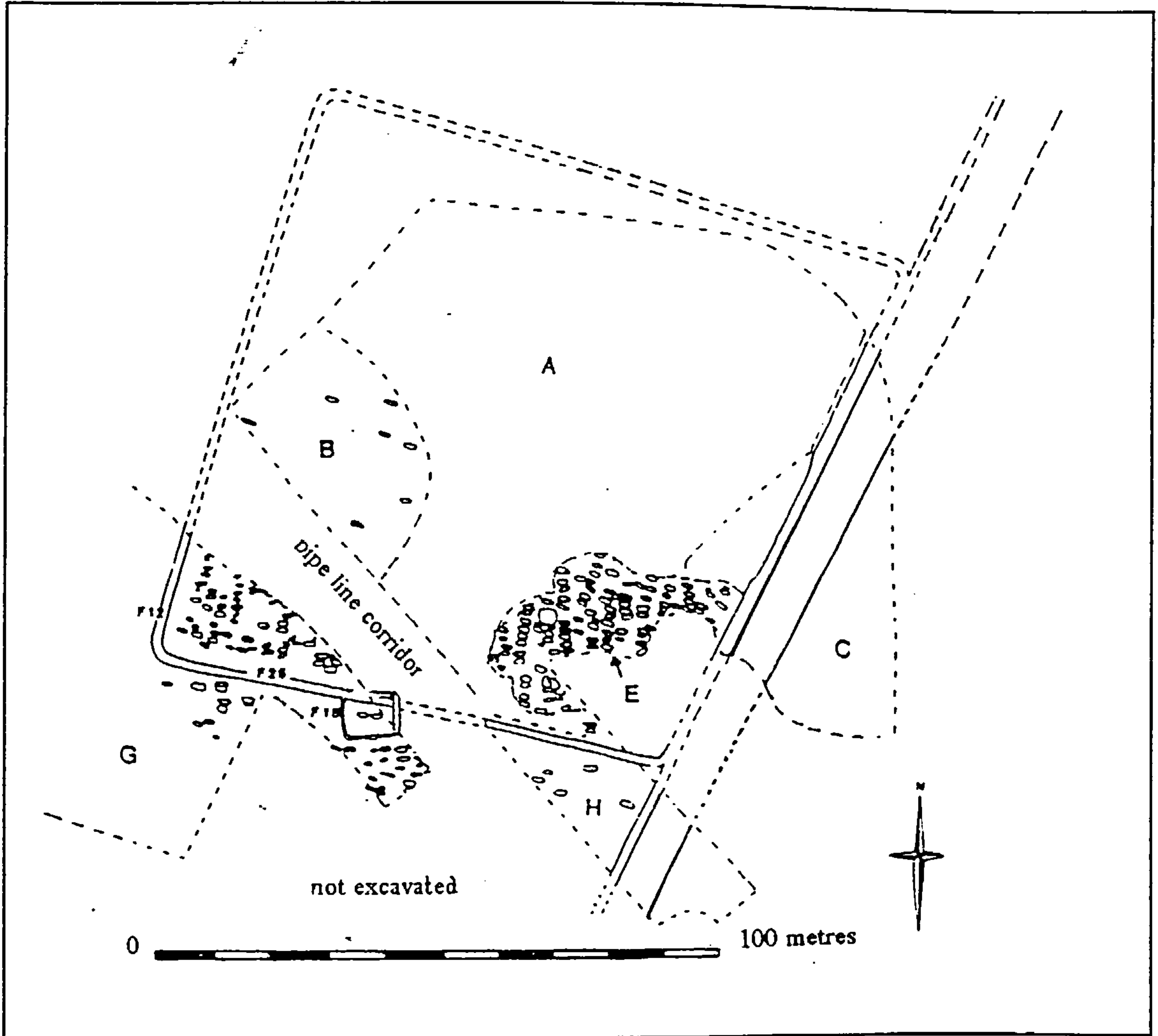
Location and plan of burial areas at Ashton (after Shaw 1987)



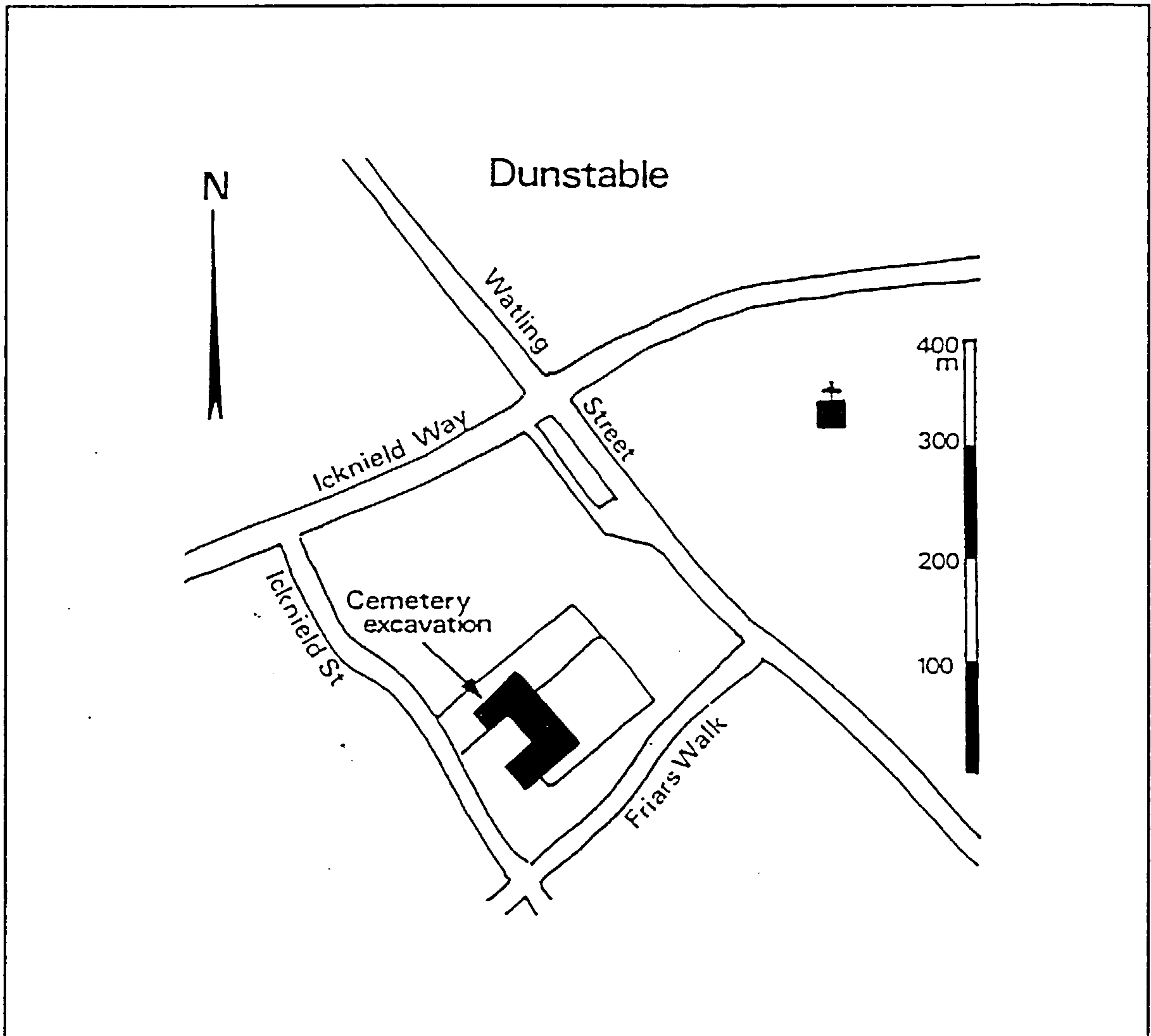
Plan of the cemetery at Cannington (after Rahtz 1977)



Distribution of cemeteries around Dorchester on Thames (after Chambers 1987)

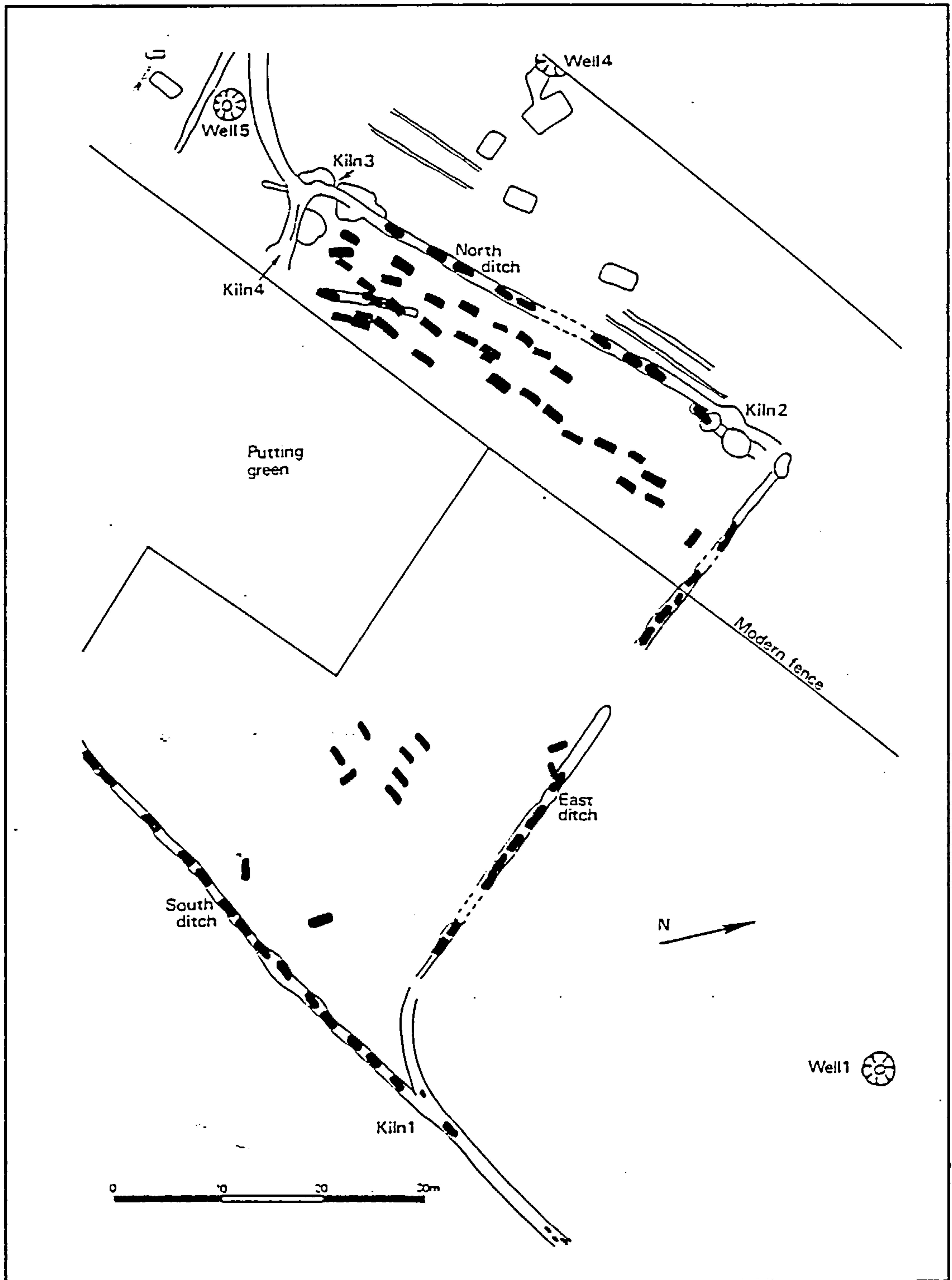


Plan of the cemetery at Queensford Farm, Dorchester on Thames (after Chambers 1987)

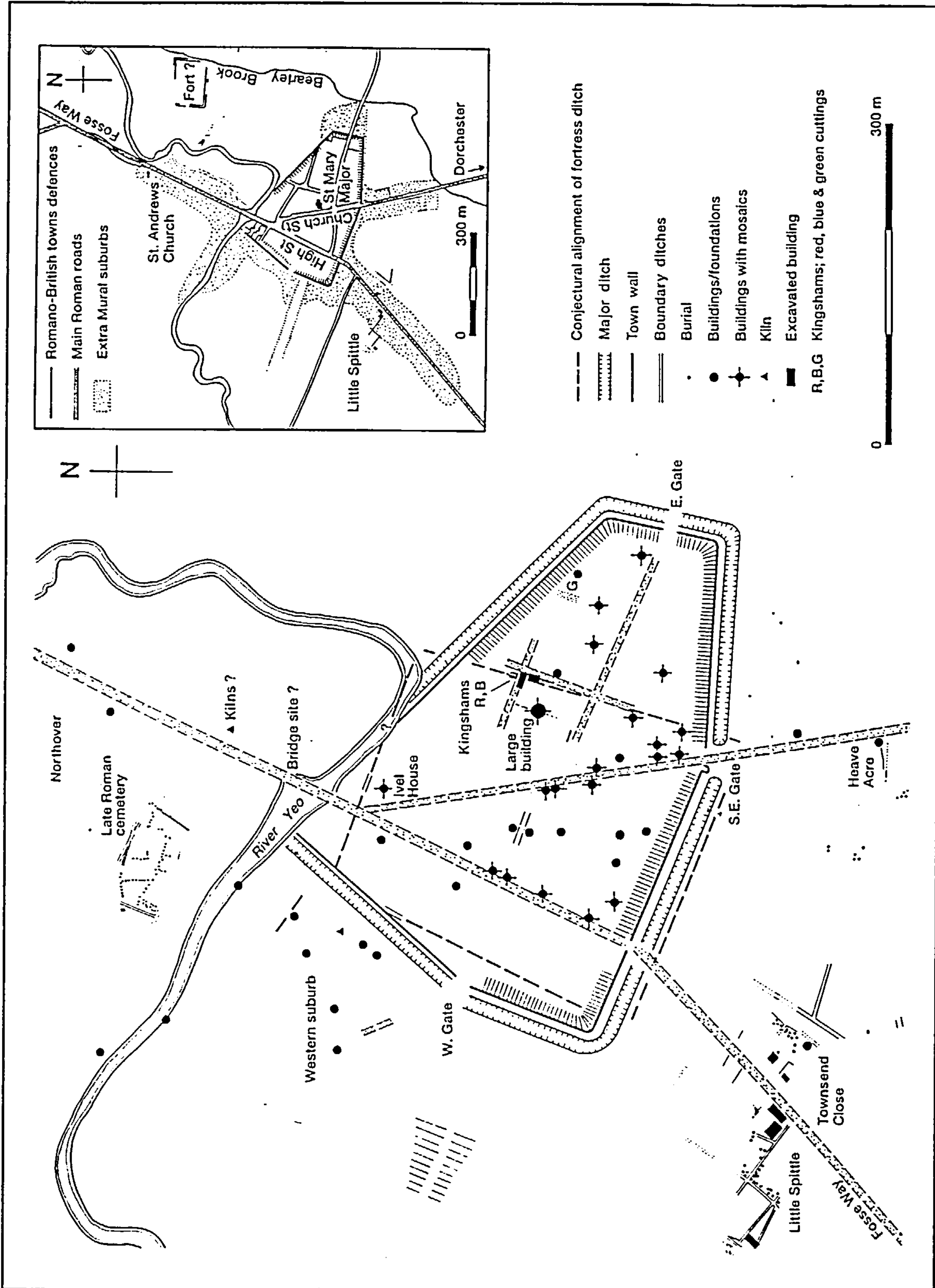


Location of the cemetery at Dunstable (after Matthews 1981)





Plan of the cemetery at Dunstable (after Matthews 1981)

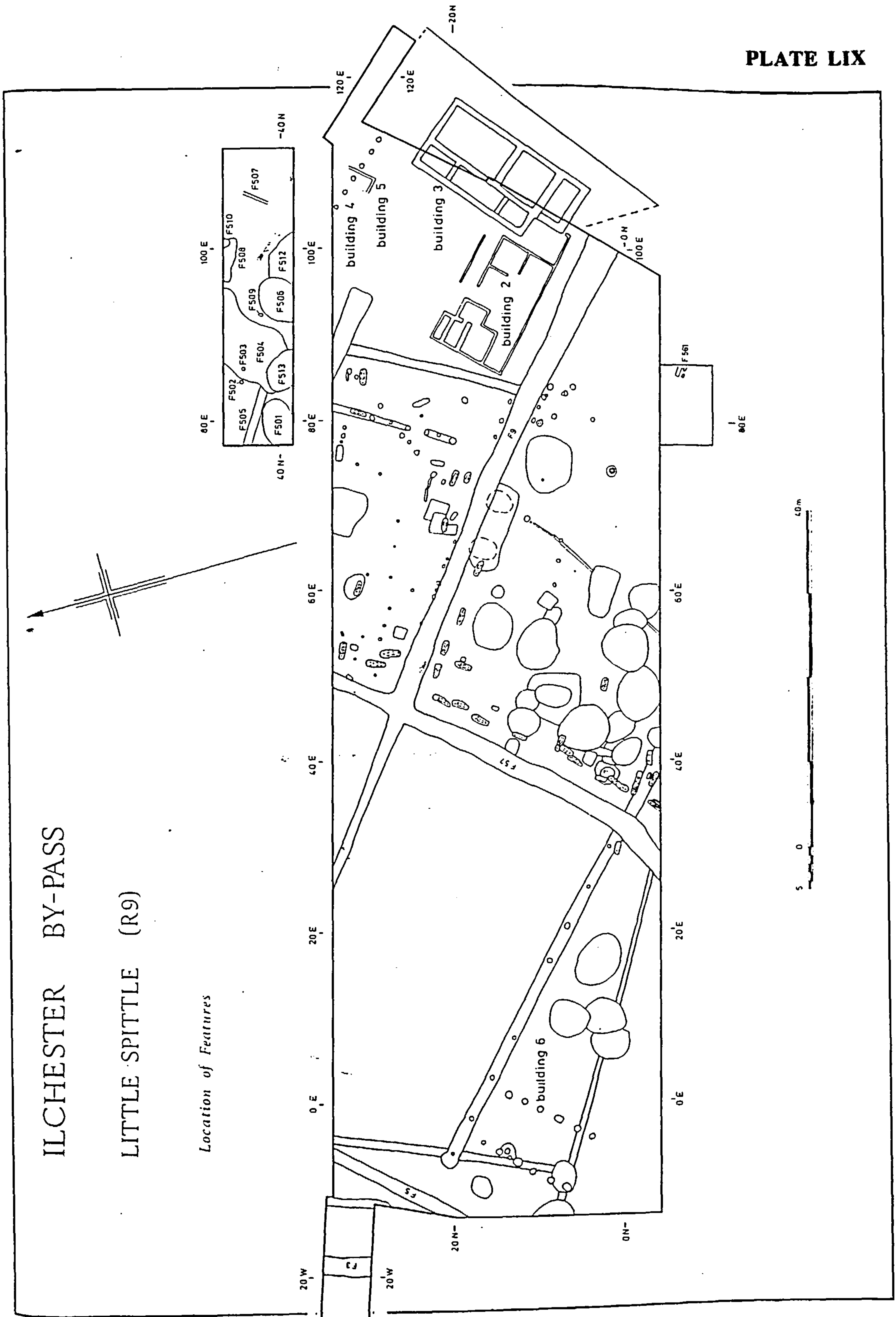


Distribution of cemeteries at Ilchester (after Leach 1982)

ILCHESTER BY-PASS

LITTLE SPITTLE (R9)

*Location of Features*

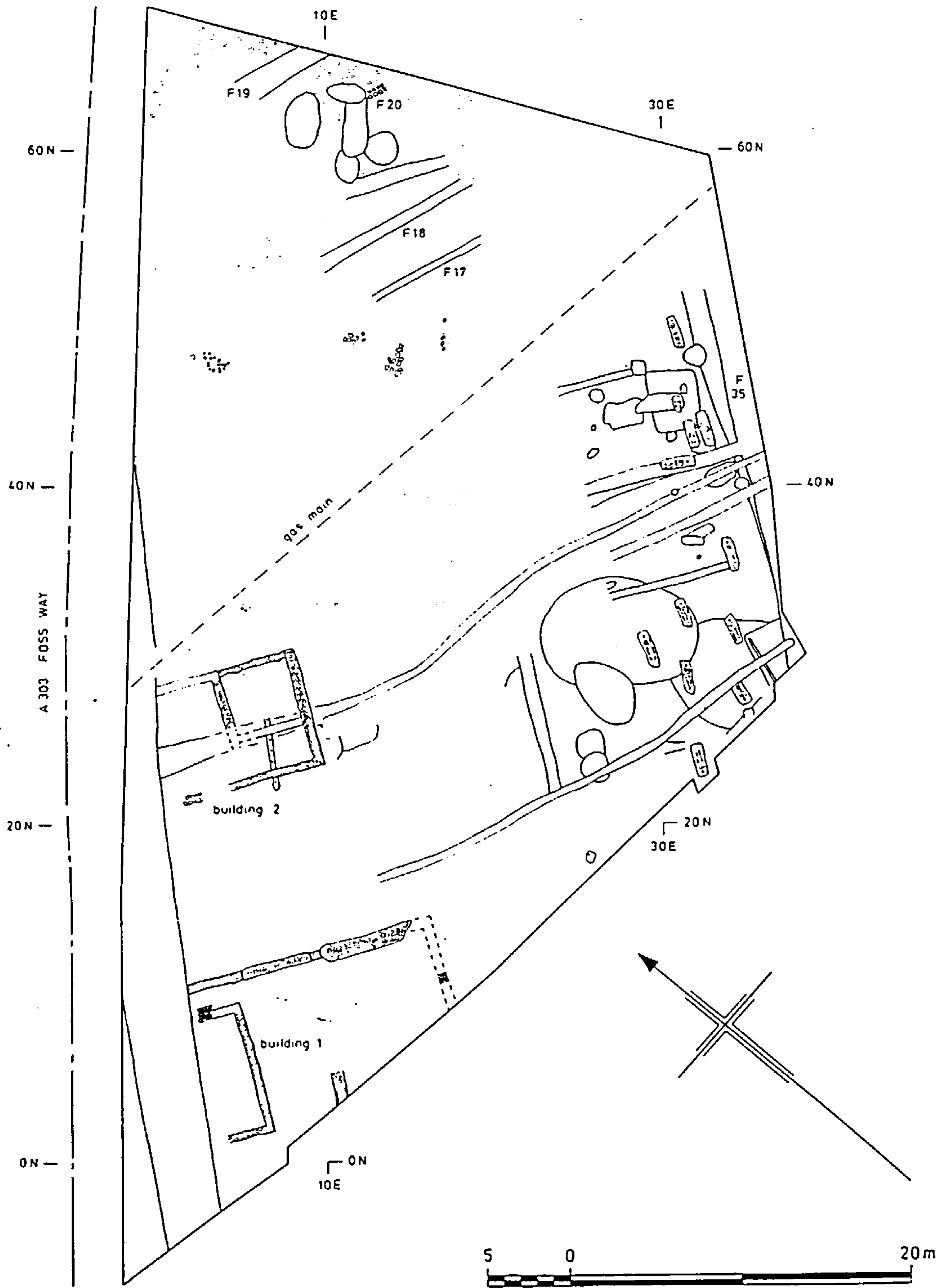


Plan of the cemetery at Little Spittle, Ilchester (after Leach 1982)

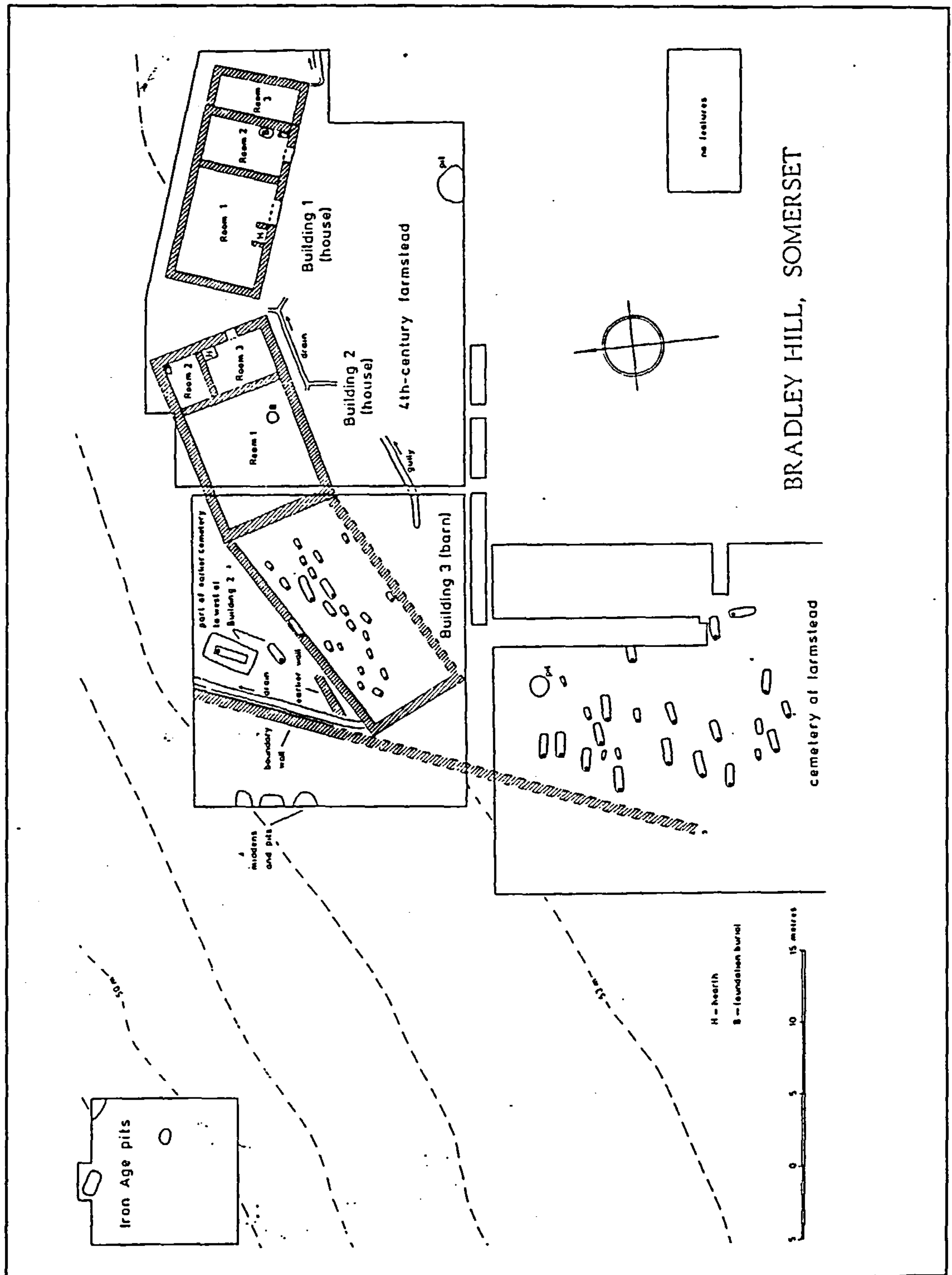
# ILCHESTER BY-PASS

## TOWNSEND CLOSE (R10)

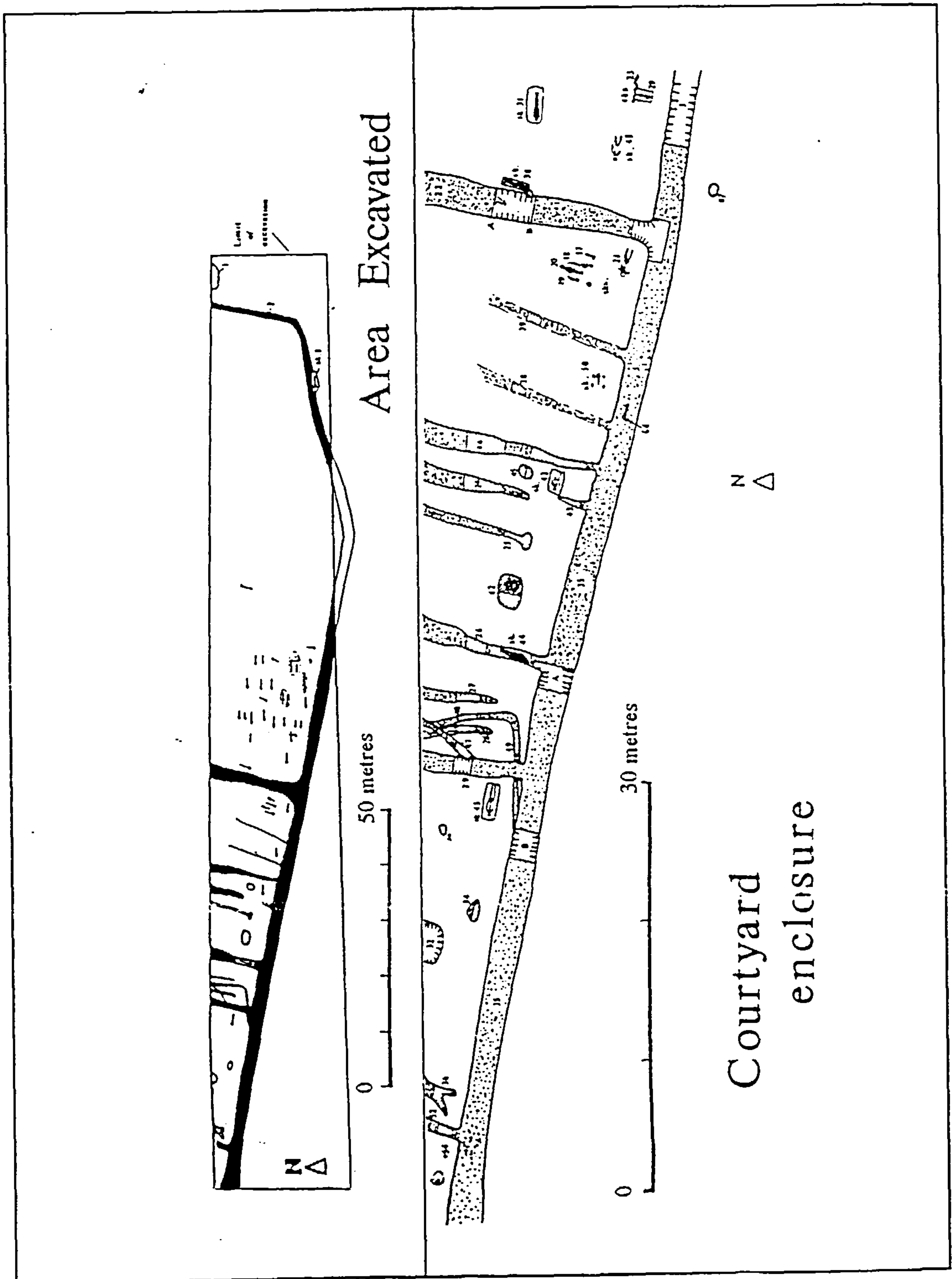
*Location of Features*



Plan of the cemetery at Townsend Close, Ilchester (after Leach 1982)



Plan of the cemetery at Bradley Hill, Somerton (after Leech 1981)



Plan of the cemetery at Lynch Farm, Peterborough (after Jones 1975)